THE SAMARITAN

Shewing that
Many and Unneceſſary

IMPOSITIONS

ARE NOT

The *Oyl* that muſt *Heal* the *Church*:

Together with
The WAY or MEANS to do it.

By a Country Gentleman who goes to *Common-Prayer*, and not to *Meetings*.

Ou ce ſont des diverſités, qui laſſent les Fondemens de la Religion en leur entier, & ne nous obligent a manquer, ni au ſervice de Dieu, ni a la dilection des hommes, c'eſt la ou doit avoir lieu ce que preſcrit l'Apoſtre, *Et ſi vous ſentes quelque choſe autrement, Dieu vous le revelera auſſi.* Daillé on Phil. c. 3. v. 15.

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THE SAMARITAN.

SECT. I.

FOraſmuch as the *Preſs* ſpawns *Books* and *Pamphlets*, in as great abundance as the River *Nile* doth Froggs, many whereof ſeem to be compounded of Venom, and written with no other deſign, than to foment *Diviſions*, and exaſperate the ſeveral *Factions* that are among us; I think I may do ſome office of *Love* and *Kindneſs* to my *Countrey*, and the *Church of God* therein, if I write a few Sheets on the behalf of *Amity* and *Peace*, and with purpoſe to allay the *Heats*, and calm the *Rage* and *Paſſions* of men.

I expect the ſame *Fate* with others, that have endeavoured to *perſuade* the *Contentious* to *Reconciliation*. The *Bouteſeus* and *Bedlams*, will *Rage* and *Foam*, they will *ſpit* their *venom*, and *diſgorge* their *gall*; and by ugly *Inſinuations* repreſent me as a *ſecret Enemy* to *Church* and *State*; and whatever elſe the *Father of Lyes* may *ſuggeſt* unto them.

But I will take liberty to *advertiſe* them, that

if they pleaſe, they may *ſpare* their *Paſſion*, and *reſtrain* their *Wrath*; they may *keep* it in *reſerve* for ſome *other occaſion*; for I am utterly *above* the *reach* of it, and ſhall be no more *concerned* in their *Revilings*, than the *Moon* in the *barking* of *little waſpiſh Dogs*.

Nevertheleſs, if their *Impotence* be ſuch, that they cannot *forbear*; and if the *reek* of their own *vomit* be *fragrant* and *aromatick* to them, I ſhall not *envy* them that *pleaſure* Let them *enjoy* all the *ſatisfaction* they can find in it, I ſhall receive no more *injury* by what they *ſay*, than by what they *dream*; and peradventure there may be as much *worth*, *weight* and *ſenſe* in the one, as in the other.

I honour my *Soveraign*; I love the *Government* in *Church* and *State*; I hate both the *Civil* and *Eccleſiaſtical Piques* and *Animoſities* that are maintained and kept up among us, againſt all the *Senſe* and *Reaſon* of the *World*; and I wiſh with all my ſoul, that the *ſeveral Parties* in this *Nation*, would lay aſide their *Prejudices* and *Paſſions*, and *impartially ſtudy* the things that belong to our *Common Peace*: I am ſure 'tis high time to do it, and I fear if it be delayed a while longer, 'twill be too late to attempt it. There's a Gentleman at *Paris*, and another at *Rome*, that looks thorow their fingers, and laugh at our *Diviſions*, and hope to make *good advantage* by them in due time; and I make no doubt but that by their Emiſſaries they do, and will endeavour to continue the *Breaches*, and hinder all *Coalition* among us.

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The *Neceſſity* of *Union* therefore being obvious, and granted by all men of ſenſe and conſideration, I have reſolved to caſt in my Symbol or Mite, for the promotion of it. What I ſhall ſay, I know will not pleaſe all men: Nay, I am ſure ſome will be angry and inraged thereby. But *jacta eſt alea*, I have computed my Coſt, and told them at what Rate I ſhall value their diſpleaſure. I ſhall ſpeak what I think, and do with ſome aſſurance and confidence believe, I ſhall ſpeak for *Peace*; and in ſo doing I ſhall ſpeak for *God*, and his *Chriſt*, and for the *Church*, which is his *Body*, and purchaſed with his *Blood*. And I am not without hope, but that God may bleſs what ſhall be ſaid, and make it ſerviceable to the promoting of that end. I am one of the meaneſt of the Worſhippers of Chriſt our Lord, but 'tis his pleaſure ſometimes, by *weak things to confound the mighty*; *and by things that are baſe and deſpiſed, yea by things that are not, to bring to nought things that are.*

SECT. II.

THE *Union* and *Peace* that I intend to diſcourſe, is *a Union of Judgment and Practice in matters of Religion, and the Worſhip of God*; together with that mutual Love, and thoſe good Offices that are the proper fruits, effects and conſequent thereof. And by *Religion*, and the *Worſhip of God*, I mean the *Chriſtian Religion*, and thoſe wayes of worſhiping and ſerving the Majeſty of

Heaven that are preſcribed unto us by the Chriſtian Laws, the Records whereof are in the holy Scriptures.

That this *Union* and *Peace* is an excellent thing, is the confeſſion of all Chriſtians. Thoſe that do practically hate and abhor it, pretend a mighty eſteem and veneration for it; thoſe that deſtroy it, ſpeak much in its favour; and the moſt mortal Enemies thereof, will not fail to make its Panegyrick, and exalt its praiſe. The *Romaniſts* (who are certainly the greateſt Incendiaries and Firebrands that are upon Earth, and have for many years, yea ages paſt, and do at this time imbroil and fill all *Europe* with Confuſion and Diſorders, with ſecret Conſpiracies and Confederations, with open Wars, Violence, Oppreſſion and Rapine, are (as they would be thought) the moſt paſſionate Lovers, and greateſt Admirers of it: But whilſt men ſee their fangs, and feel their paws, they will believe them Bears and Lions, though they ſhould avow themſelves the moſt harmleſs Doves or Lambs.

But why is it that *Peace* and *Union* hath the univerſal ſuffrage of men, even of thoſe that have a practical abhorrence and deteſtation for it? 'Tis its own proper Excellency and Advantages that commands their Approbations. *Union* and *Peace* (as all other virtues) have their charms and attractives; and ſo great is the force of them, that men cannot behold and conſider them, without being inamour'd of them, and captivated by them. But though the excellency, lovelineſs and beauty of

Union

Union and *Peace*, do ſubdue the underſtandings and judgments of men, their Intereſts, their Paſſions, and their Luſts, will not be conquered by any of them. Though *Union* be never ſo lovely in the opinion of their Conſciences, they will ſacrifice it a thouſand times in favour to their Pride, their Ambition, their Covetouſneſs, their love of Empire, Domination, and other Luſts.

Though the Commendations that are given to *Union* and *Peace*, be no proof of the virtue or excellency of thoſe that ſpeak in the praiſe thereof, yet 'tis an undeniable Evidence of its own proper worth and advantages. That which hath the ſuffrage and approbation of all mens Conſciences, that which hath the eſteem, and is the Darling even of its very Enemies, muſt needs be very excellent, worthy and valuable.

The Excellencies and Advantages of *Union*, are moſt evident in the Cauſes of it, and in the Effects that it produces in the World. *Union* is the effect of good Knowledge, & ſound Underſtanding; (for that *Union* that is ſeen among the Ignorant, is no other than what is found in a heap of Logs or Stones, which doth not indeed deſerve that name.)

Thoſe that fill the World with Controverſies, Quarrels and Contentions, are for the moſt part men of ſmall underſtanding, and of raw and undigeſted notions. 'Tis half-witted people that ſet the Churches of Chriſtendom together by the Ears, and kindle thoſe flames in the Houſe of God, that are like utterly to waſte and conſume it. Men of

great underſtanding are modeſt and peaceable; they will not contend for trifles, nor expreſs great Zeal for any thing, but the great Eſſentials of Faith and Godlineſs: They will not ſuſpend the *Peace of the Church* upon uncertain, or unneceſſary things. In things of that nature they can permit men to their Liberty, and where Liberty is permitted, there is ſeldom any Controverſie; but where there is unneceſſary reſtraint, there is everlaſting quarrels, and will be to all Generations.

Let me add further, *Union* is an effect of great holineſs and ſanctity of mind and nature. Let mens Knowledge be never ſo great, if they be not born of God, and partakers of a Spirit of Holineſs and Sanctification, they will quarrel and contend everlaſtingly, not in compliance with their Conſciences, but in favour to their Luſts. If enquiry be made, 'twill be found true, that the holieſt perſons, and ſuch as have moſt of the Image of God impreſſed upon their Soul's, are alwaies the moſt peaceable, quiet, and give leaſt diſturbance to the World; and what I have ſaid of Perſons, is true of Churches; thoſe Churches whoſe Members are moſt holy, moſt renewed, ſanctified and transformed, are the moſt freeſt from Diviſions, Quarrels and Separations.

Again, *Union* is an Effect of great Self-denyal, Mortification, contempt of the World, and all the Pomp and Glory of it. This I do confeſs is comprehended in what I ſaid in the preceding Paragraph; but that what I intend may be the more obvious

and

and apparent, I have choſen to diſcourſe it ſeparately, and by it ſelf. Men of unmortified Luſts and Paſſions, men that cannot deny themſelves in any thing, men that are fond of the World, and the Advantages of it, will never reſt, nor permit others to do ſo: They will move all ſtones, and make all tryals that they can imagine, will ſerve or advance their Pride, their Ambition, their Riches, their Honours, or whatever are their darling and beloved Luſts.

Many of the Antient Schiſms and Hereſies, that ſo plagued the Church of God, were occaſioned by the Pride and Covetouſneſs of Churchmen. The Church continued for many years a Virgin. *Thebuthis* was the firſt that corrupted it with falſe Doctrine, διὰ τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν ἐπίσκοπον, *becauſe he was not made a Biſhop*, as *Hegeſippus* reports. *Euſeb. lib. quar. cap.* 22. *Novatianus*, a Presbyter of the Church of *Rome*, ἀφθεὶς ὑπερηφανίᾳ, *being puffed up with Pride*, became the Author of a Sect which called themſelves *Cathariſts*, but by others were called *Novatians*. *Paulus Samoſatenus* broke the Peace of the Church, and eſpouſed the Doctrine of *Ebion* and *Artemon*, and affirmed our Lord Jeſus a man of common human Race, ὡς κοινὸν τὸν φύσιν ἀνθρώπων γενόμενον, *Euſ. lib.* 7. *cap.* 27. And what he was for his Morals, thoſe that pleaſe may read *Euſ. lib.* 7. *cap.* 30. He was covetous, unjuſt, proud, effeminate; he permitted his Presbyters to partake in the ſame ſins, that conſcience of their own guilt might hinder and reſtrain them from opening

opening and expoſing his vile abominations. *Arius* was a proud man, and affected Domination; and becauſe *Alexander* was preferred before him, and made Biſhop of *Alexandria*, he mutinyed the Preſbyters, and raiſed thoſe Diviſions in that Church that from thence were ſpread into almoſt all the Chriſtian World. *Vid. Theod. lib. 1. cap. 3. & 4.* But it would be endleſs to mention the Quarrels and Contentions which have been raiſed in the Church of God, by men of unmortified Luſts and Paſſions, and no *Union* or *Peace* will be had in the Chriſtian world, whilſt thoſe Vermine are lodged and nouriſhed in the breaſts of men. They are humble, mortified, and ſelf-denying men that live quietly, and give no diſturbance to the Church or World in which they live, and whereof they are Members.

SECT. III.

SOmething having been ſaid of the *Cauſes* of *Union* and *Peace*, let me add ſome few words of the *Effects* thereof, and but a few; for I intend no large or elaborate Diſcourſe. *Union* would make the Church ſtrong and impregnable, were the Members thereof united in and among themſelves. Were they of one mind, and one heart, they would ſtand firm like a Rock, againſt all the Aſſaults of their Enemies. For beſides their own proper ſtrength, which would be conſequent to their *Union*, God would ſtand by them, and be their Protector and

and Defender. 'Tis Faction and Diviſion that weakens the Church, and cauſes God to withdraw his defence and guardianſhip from it; and then it becomes a prey to the Enemies thereof.

Moreover, were the Church of God at *Union* and *Peace* within it ſelf, it would be beautiful and lovely in the Eyes of the World. Did the Members thereof agree together; were they of one judgment in the Doctrines of Religion, and of one practice in the duties and actions thereof, how comely and decorous would the proſpect be? And how would it raviſh thoſe that behold and conſider it? even the very Enemies thereof would cry out and ſay, *How beautiful are thy Tents O* Jacob, *and thy Tabernacles O* Iſrael!

Were the Church of God at *Peace* and *Unity* with it ſelf, it would be a mighty means to Convert the World, and bring it over to the Chriſtian Religion. Were there a great and mutual Friendſhip and Amity among the ſeveral Parts and Members of it, it would be a mighty Evidence of the Truth of Chriſtianity, and almoſt all Mankind would fall under the force of it: The Authority thereof would be irreſiſtible; 'tis the Factions, the Feuds, the Diviſions, the Strifes, Hatreds and Contentions that are in Chriſtendom, and among the Churches thereof, that makes them a ſcorn and abhorrence to *Turks* and *Infidels*, as well as to the Atheiſtical and prophane that are among them. 'Tis the everlaſting Quarrels, and mutual Cenſures and Condemnations of each other, that

that makes Christianity a poor languid thing, and takes off all the convincing power thereof in the apprehension of its Enemies.

Again, were the Church of God united, and at Peace in it self, the mutual offices of Love and Kindness, of Charity and Compassion, which would be exercised by the Members thereof, would very much sweeten and abate the Miseries and Calamities of the present Life and State. The Rich would minister to the wants and necessities of the Poor, and the Poor would chearfully serve, and minister to the advantages of the Rich. According to their capacities they would mutually help and assist each other; and by these mutual offices of endearment and kindness, much of the miseries and infelicities of Life would be removed, prevented, and sweetened, and the World be a much more happy place than now it is.

The holiness of mens hearts and lives, would be very much encreased and advanced by *Union* and *Peace*. Quarrels and Contentions do heat mens spirits, and fill them full of rancour, spite, malice and bitterness. It makes them fearful, jealous, and suspicious of each other, and these kind of unhallowed passions do drink up their spirits, and possess their souls, insomuch that they have no room or leisure for the introducing of pious affections, holy habits, and a divine frame and temper of mind; whereas, were men at *Union* and *Peace*, they would be free of these Diabolical Passions, and would be at leisure to trim and adorn their own Souls with the Ornaments

Ornaments and Perfections of Chriſtians: They would have time and opportunity to impreſs the Image of God upon them, and their communion in the Publick Worſhip of God would contribute great aſſiſtance to it.

In fine, the Church of God on Earth would be ſome ſmall figure and reſemblance of the Church of God in Heaven, were it united, and did the Members of it live in Love and Peace together. *There* are no Diviſions or Separations; *There* are no Enmities, Variances, or Strifes. All love and ſerve God with one heart, and one conſent; all have a mutual love and kindneſs for each other. And ſomething like this would be ſeen upon Earth, if Chriſtians and Churches would, or could unite and live in Amity and Peace. But alas, *Unity* and *Peace* ſeem to have forſaken the Earth; and ſome men ſeem reſolved, that they ſhall never return again, the conditions they propoſe for the reſtauration of it, being utterly impracticable, as ſhall be ſaid and proved anon.

SECT. IV.

THE Excellency and Advantages of *Union* and *Peace*, being ſuch as I have mentioned, (to which many more might be added) it will eaſily be granted, that all Chriſtians are obliged to endeavour the obtaining of it. Things ſo worthy and excellent, ſo profitable and advantagious to Kingdoms and Nations, to Cities, Towns and Villages, Families,

Families, and ſingle perſons, to the Bodies and Souls of men, certainly ought to be proſecuted with utmoſt might and endeavour; it ſhould be *ſought as Silver, and ſearched after as fine Gold.* All juſt and prudent means ſhould be eſſayed for the attaining of it.

Our Intereſt, as well as our Duty, layeth on us the greateſt obligations to ſeek and purſue *Peace* and *Unity*. The love of our ſelves, and our own advantages, as well as the many Precepts, and earneſt Exhortations of Jeſus Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, ſhould make us earneſt and zealous in our labours to obtain it. Strife and Contention, Diviſions and Factions, deſtroy and take away all the comforts and pleaſures of life, and are great breaches of the Divine Commandments; yea they are a mighty reproach and ſcandal to the Chriſtian Religion, and huge pleaſure and gratification to the Devil, that great Enemy of God and Men.

And ſurely methinks, if men would but give themſelves the liberty of a little ſober conſideration, they ſhould not with ſo much earneſtneſs, obſtinacy and zeal offend God, miſchief and undo themſelves in time and eternity; for no other reaſon than to pleaſe the Devil, and gratifie ſome bruti-ſh and prophane paſſions, which have him for their Author and Original. But men will not conſider, or if they do conſider, they adviſe with their luſts, but not with their reaſon; with their paſſions and prejudices, but not with their conſciences; and thence 'tis, that the effect of their conſide-

conſideration is many times more pernicious and prejudicial to *Peace* and *Union*, than if they had totally neglected it. For 'tis impartial Reaſon, and well inform'd Judgment and Conſcience, that ſpeak in the favour of *Union* and *Peace*; but Ambition and Pride, Love of Riches, Empire, Honour and Dominion, are for Faction and Diviſion: They are for ſetting the Church (and the World too) in a flame, hoping to make ſome advantage thereby.

Theſe things peradventure will be granted by the moſt of men; thoſe that are the greateſt Dividers will acknowledge the excellency of *Peace*, and the duty and obligation of labouring after it; they will confeſs that it is the Intereſt of Mankind to proſecute and obtain it, and to adviſe with their reaſon, and not with their paſſions, when they conſider how it be may recalled and reſtored again to the Church of God, and Societies of Men. They will alſo grant, that there is fault ſomewhere, and that ſome men are to be blamed, that there is ſo little *Amity* and *Peace* among Chriſtian People and Churches; and that it is become ſuch a mighty difficulty to heal the breaches of Chriſtendom, and to compound the Differences that are in ſome particular Parts and Kingdoms of it.

But although all men will acknowledge that the fault lies ſomewhere, yet there are none of the Contending Parties that will lay any blame at their own doors. The Church of *Rome* does acknowledge, and ſome of their Writers ſeem to bewail the

the Diviſions and Factions that are in the Chriſtian World; but that they are no cauſe of them, they do avow with all the aſſurance imaginable. The *Calviniſts* and *Lutherans* do alſo confeſs and bewail the Diviſions among Proteſtants; but they will both proteſt that they are not the faulty Cauſe thereof. To come nearer home, the *Conformiſts* and *Nonconformiſts* in the Church of *England*, do ſufficiently confeſs, and many of them I believe, lament the Differences that are among us; but neither of them will acknowledge themſelves worthy of any blame: They are both Innocent in their Opinions, but both Faulty in the Opinion of their Adverſaries.

But peradventure an imprejudiced and unbyaſſed Spectator, (if ſuch a one be to be found) may think that there are Faults on both ſides, among the ſeveral Factions of Chriſtendom, though not equally great. The *Romaniſts*, without doubt, are the greateſt Make-bates that are upon Earth, and the moſt Faulty Dividers; and yet I believe that there are ſome Proteſtants that make the Difference greater in ſome things than really it is, betwixt us and them. And there is no man that ſhall calmly read the Late Theſes of the Learned *Le Blanc*, but will be ſatisfied of it. The *Lutherans* certainly are much to blame in ſeparating from the *Calviniſts*, and ſpeaking and writing ſo bitterly and ſpitefully concerning them: And yet 'tis poſſible that the *Calviniſts* may not be altogether Innocent; for amongſt them alſo are found men of unyielding ſpirits,

ſpirits, and ſuch as lay too much weight upon ſmall things. As for the Contentions among our ſelves (if I may be pardoned the liberty of ſaying it) I do not doubt but we are all to blame.

SECT. V.

NOW the great Cauſe (in my apprehenſion) of all the Diviſions, Quarrels, Schiſms and Separations that are in the Chriſtian World, is the making and impoſing things unneceſſary, doubtful, difficult, unintelligible, unprofitable, and numerous, the Conditions of Church Communion. This hath rent and torn the Church of God in pieces theſe thirteen hundred years; and yet thoſe that are the Guides and Governours of Churches, either cannot, or will not ſee it. Let the Hiſtories of the Church be conſulted, and this may be eaſily obſerved. What is it that divides the *Greek* and *Roman* Churches from each other? What is it that divides the *Greek* Churches among themſelves? What is it that divides the *Roman* Churches from thoſe of the *Proteſtant* Profeſſion? What divides the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*? What is it that divides the *Chriſtian People* of this Nation? Is it not the Impoſing of things doubtful, dark, uncertain, and unneceſſary, and this with a pertinacious and inflexible rigour, and ſeverity one againſt another?

Do not all theſe Churches agree in the great Eſſentials of the Chriſtian Religion? Do they not

all believe the common Articles of the *Christian Faith*? Do they not all believe the *Lord's Prayer* to contain the ſum and matter of all the Requeſts that we are to make to God? Do they not believe the *Ten Commandments* to comprehend the main, if not all thoſe Duties that we owe to God and Men? And are not theſe things in which all agree, ſufficient for the *Union* of Chriſtians? Might they not live together in Love, notwithſtanding their other Differences? Or, though they could not communicate together (as indeed *Proteſtants* cannot communicate with the *Romiſh Churches*) might they not maintain *Love* and *Peace* under diſtinct Communions? Might they not repute each other *Chriſtians*, and *Chriſtian Churches*, though not equally ſound and perfect? Theſe things methinks, might be done, were it not that a Spirit of Impoſition, and Arbitrary Domination over the Judgments and Conſciences of Men, hath poſſeſſed the Guides of Chriſtendom; All men muſt believe, and think, and ſpeak, according to their apprehenſions, or elſe they are no Chriſtians. Their Judgments, yea ſometimes their Prejudices, and their Dreams, muſt be made the Conditions of Communion; and if any refuſe to *ſwear to their words*, and will ſee with their own Eyes, and believe and practiſe according to the Light of their own underſtandings, they are Hereticks, and unworthy the Name and Communion of Chriſtians.

And

And hence proceed the various Separations and Divisions, and all the direful and tragical Effects of them, which have made the Christian World a *Bedlam*, and sometimes a Field of Blood, to the reproach of Christians, to the scandal of Infidels, and to the perverting of many Professors of Christianity to Atheism, or Apostacy to some other false Religion.

SECT. VI.

TO press this a little, Whosoever considers the great variety and difference that is to be observed in Human Minds, must find that Imposition of many doubtful, and unnecessary things is no proper means of preserving *Peace* and *Union* in the Church of God, especially among *Protestants*, where a judgment of discretion, or a liberty of believing, according to the convictions of our own minds, is confessed the undoubted right of every Reasonable Man. Is it imaginable that Men whose understandings are almost of as various degrees and sizes, as are the shapes and figures of their faces, should agree in the same sentiments and perceptions concerning things dark, doubtful, and unnecessary? Is it imaginable that all Christians should have the same thoughts, and make the same judgment concerning the Determinations of the Council of *Trent*? Is it conceivable that all the Christians in *England*, or all the Clergy in *England* should have the same conceptions, and entertain the same Opinions concerning the Doctrine, Discipline,

and Liturgy of this Church? To me it ſeems altogether as improbable, as that twenty thouſand blind Men ſhould from twenty thouſand places, move and march, and at laſt meet together, and put themſelves in good order on *New-market* Heath, or the Plains of *Sarum*. And why ſhould Impoſitions be made, where there is no probability, or indeed poſſibility of Aſſent unto them? Or are ſuch Impoſitions, which make Diviſion in *our Church*, a likely means of making *Peace* in the Churches of *Chriſtendom*? He that can believe it, may with as much reaſon believe that the caſting on fewel and combuſtible matter, is a means to extinguiſh a furious raging flame; or the way to preſerve a Ship from ſinking, is to commit it to the Wind and Waves without any Pilot or Perſon to ſit at the Helm, and manage the Courſe of it.

That the gradual Difference of Mens Underſtandings, is very great, and almoſt infinite, cannot reaſonably be denied. Parents, Teachers of Schools, Tutors, and all kind of Artificers, find it ſo in the Experience of every day. It hath been ſo in all Ages, and will be ſo for all that I can ſee, as long as the World endures. Whether there be an inequality among Souls; or whether this great variety proceeds from the differing mixtures of the Elements, that compound our Bodies, and out of which our Organs are made, I will not determine, though I incline to believe the former; for 'tis paſt my imagination to conceive how the various

rious mixtures of ſenſleſs Elements or Atoms, ſhould produce all that variety that is obſervable in the Underſtandings of Men from the greateſt Statesman, Philoſopher, or Divine, to the meaneſt Peaſant, or the moſt blockiſh Dolt.

Parents firſt find a vaſt difference in the capacities of their Children; ſome of them are of quick and pregnant Wit and Ingeny; they eaſily receive and apprehend whatever is propoſed to them; others are dull and heavy, and receive with difficulty ſuch things as are offered them for their Learning and Knowledge. Some of them are capable of underſtanding ſome things, whereas of other things they are as uncapable almoſt as the verieſt Idiots. The Experience of Schoolmaſters next, is much the ſame: Some of thoſe Children that are committed to their care, do readily learn and receive whatever they teach and inform them: Others with difficulty and much labour. Some can never be brought to learn any thing that is regardable, by all the care and endeavours in the World. Tutors at the Univerſity find the like variety among their Pupils. Some Youths hear their Lectures, and underſtand and remember the Contents of them; and if they be examined concerning them, will give a good and fair account of them: But others hear them, but neither underſtand, nor remember almoſt any thing of them; and if the ſame things be repeated over again, with all the clearneſs that can be expreſſed by words, yet they ſtill remain without Knowledge or Un-

derſtanding therein. You may as well think to draw a Cable through the Eye of a Needle, as to impreſs Learning upon ſome mens Minds. Artificers and Mechanicks ſpeak the ſame Language, and give us the ſame Informations. Some Apprentices eaſily learn the Arts that they profeſs; others do it with great difficulty, and are but bunglers at the laſt. *Non puede ſer mas negro el cuerbo que las alas*, ſaith the *Spaniſh* Proverb, *The Crow cannot be blacker than her wings.*

And as the Degrees and varieties of Mens underſtandings are vaſtly great and many, ſo are their prejudices and Anticipations. Some perſons ſuck in certain Opinions with their Milk; they receive them from their Parents, and ſuch as give them their Education. Thus ſome are prejudiced for the Doctrine of *Calvin*, and others for the Doctrine of *Aaminius*; thus ſome perſons are prejudiced for *Epiſcopal Government* in the Church, and others for a *Presbyterian Parity*: Thus ſome contract a kindneſs for a pompous and ceremonious Religion, and Way of Worſhipping God, others contract a fondneſs for a very plain and and ſimple Way and Method of Worſhip and Devotion.

Moreover ſome men read but one ſort of Books, and care not to read any thing that is written in oppoſition to their Anticipations; or if they do read any thing of that nature, 'tis with ſo great a prejudice, that their judgments are rather confirmed than altered thereby. They are ſtrongly perſuaded

perſuaded of the truth of their own apprehenſions, & what is intended to ſhake them, doth but (as the Wind by Trees) fix and eſtabliſh them. That this is a fault I do eaſily grant, but 'tis eaſier to obſerve than cure it; and that mens prejudices are ſtrangely fixed and confirmed thereby, cannot be denied.

Beſides, men are ſtrangely prejudiced againſt ſome Opinions, by the infamous reports that have been raiſed concerning thoſe that have defended and maintained them. Thus the Papiſts are prejudiced againſt the Doctrine of Proteſtants, by impudent and frontleſs Lyes, that have been raiſed againſt *Luther* and *Calvin*, and other great inſtruments in the Reformation: And thus many among us have an Implacable Pique and Diſpleaſure againſt Diſſenters and all their Opinions, becauſe ſome men do report them a company of ſeditious People, that can never be quiet, but are always libelling Authority, and diſturbing all Order and Governments whereſoever they live. And others are as much prejudiced againſt Epiſcopacy, and the peculiar Opinions of that ſort of men, becauſe they are reported to be a generation of men, that are proud and imperious, lovers of Empire and Domination, that engroſs the Revenues of the Church, and employ them in Luxury and Senſuality, but care not for the Souls of men. If they will obey the Orders of the Church, and ſubmit to its Inſtitutions, they may defie all the Laws of God, and without reſtraint or control make what haſte

they pleaſe to Hell; they countenance the Ungodly and Prophane, and perſecute and oppreſs ſuch as fear God, & tremble at his word; they are impatient of ſuch Meetings and Aſſemblies, where a company of poor Chriſtians meet together, to hear Gods Word, and call upon his Name; but they can very patiently bear the Aſſemblies of riotous Senſualiſts and Blaſphemers, that convene to defie God, promote their own Damnation, and of as many others as they can.

Again, ſome Perſons receive prejudice againſt Opinions, from the real faults of ſome ſingle Perſons or a few men that have embraced and entertained them. Some Diſſenters have uſed ſome uncomely, indecorous, and unadviſed Expreſſions in their extemporate Prayers, and therefore they reproach and reject all extemporate Effuſions; ſome of them have preached Doctrine not agreeable to ſome mens conceptions, or have uſed homely Language and Similitudes, and therefore all their Mouths muſt be ſtopped, and the Church of God will do better without them than with them. Some Conformiſts read the Liturgy without any ſeeming ſerioufneſs or Devotion, they are in ſuch haſte to have done with it, that they can ſcarce give themſelves time enough to pronounce the words in their full extenſions, and therefore they infer that all forms of Prayer are inconſiſtent with, and enemies to Devotion, and good for nothing, but to promote Lazineſs, and introduce Formality, and a kind of Lifeleſs Worſhip of God.

Another

Another thing that fixes mens prejudices, is their worldly Intereſt and Advantage, this is that which is the ſtrength of the Papacy, and the ſupport of the Antichriſtian Hierarchy and Kingdom. The *Romaniſts* are by their Education ſeaſoned and imbued with the Opinions of that Church, and their Intereſt confirms them in the belief of them. When they come to the uſe of their Reaſon, and a Capacity of judging concerning them, men do ſeldom embrace Opinions that are inconſiſtent with their worldly Advantages, or forſake thoſe (though never ſo unreaſonable) that do favour and advance it. By believing the Doctrine of that Church they poſſeſs Eſtates and Honours, they live in Eaſe and Pleaſure, and exerciſe Dominion over the Conſciences of men; and theſe things are pleaſant to depraved Natures and corrupted Minds, and by them men are charmed and bewitched into a Belief of the wildeſt and moſt unreaſonable perſuaſions in the World. 'Twere impoſſible to hold the Members of the Church of *Rome* to a belief of its own Doctrine, were there no worldly Intereſt to biaſs and ſway their Judgments thereunto; Biſhopricks and Abbacies, Caps and Miters, and the many Preferments and Advantages wherewithal *that* Church abounds, do more to preſerve it than all the Power of Princes, yea than all the writings of the greateſt and moſt learned Champions of that cauſe. And 'tis not only in the *Roman* Church, but in ſome other Churches of *Chriſtendom* beſides, that Intereſt doth either form mens Opinions, or fix their Anticipa-

ticipations, and make them ſteddy and immutable therein.

The variety of mens Underſtandings and Prejudices, being thus obviouſly great and many, how is it poſſible that there ſhould be *Union* and *Concord* among Chriſtians, if Church Communion be ſuſpended upon the belief and acknowledgment of doubtful and unneceſſary things? May not their concord with as much reaſon be ſuſpended upon a ſimilitude of faces, features, and proportions?

SECT. VII.

BUT I ſhall argue the improbability of it, from Experience, as well as from its proper Cauſes. Do we not ſee great variety of judgments, and apprehenſions in all parts of Learning and Knowledge? Do not Grammarians differ in the ſenſe and meaning of words, and in the explication of the Idiotiſmes and peculiarities of the learned Languages? Do not our Mythologiſts differ in the account they give of the Fables of the Greek and Latine Poets? Do not ſome Learned Men think that they are (at leaſt many of them) corruptions of the true Hiſtory of things which we have in the Holy Bible? Hath not the Learned *Bochartus* among others given very probable reaſons for it? and hath not an Engliſh Doctor and Divine of our Church derided, and laughed at him for it?

Have not, and do not our Theological Criticks and Tranſlators differ in their Opinions, even concerning the Signification of words, as about the Original

Original of them? Is there any agreement or concord among them, or do we need to go far for proofs of it? The first verse in the Bible will furnish us with enough. בראשית *In the beginning* is translated by the *Jerusalem Targum*, בחוכמא *in Wisdom*, By the Arabick الاول *the first*, and by Aquila ἐν κεφαλαίῳ, *Summatim*. Nor are they agreed in the origination of the word שמים Some will have it compounded of the words מים and שם *ibi sunt aquæ*, there are waters: Others will have it derived from the Arabick word سمو *altum esse*. And as great variety may be observed in the Translation of those words, *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*, but such varieties are endless. I will only mention the different opinions of Criticks, upon those words, *Psal*, 22. 17. *They pierced*. The word כארי *some* think is derived from the Hebrew word כרה, and that the Aleph in the middle is Epenthetical, and the Jod in the end of the word is put for Vau, either by the negligence of Transcribers, or the fraud of the Jews out of spight to the Christian Religion: Others think the radix of the word is כהר, and that Aleph is put for Ajn, by a permutation usual in the Eastern Languages: Others think that the word is Syriack, and that the radix is ܟܪܐ and that 'tis here the infinitive Mood with the affix of the first Person, which often admits the signification of the preterperfect Tense among the Hebrews. This opinion they think is favoured by the Septuagint, who Translate the word ὀρυγαν, which is of the same signification with

with ܟܪ as *Ferrarius* informs us. Other diverſities of opinions there are concerning this word, thoſe that pleaſe may conſult *De Dieu*, *Glaſſius*, *Hottinger*, *Amama*, *Pocock*, in *Porta Moſis*, with many others.

Are there not great diverſity of opinions among Hiſtorians and Chronologers? do they give the ſame account of things? is there no diverſity in their narrations? Do the Greek and Roman Hiſtoriographers, report the ſame things of the Emperours, great Generals, and men of War, whoſe lives and actions they tranſcribe, and tranſmit to future Ages and Generations? Do they fix the ſame Epoches, and Periods to the beginning and end of the four famous Empires that have ſucceeded each other in the world? Are they agreed in what year of the *Julian* period to fix the Creation, or how long it hath been exiſtent? *Longomontanus* reckons it exiſtent. 3964. *Kepplerus* 3993 years before the birth of our Lord. *Ricciolus* ſays in his Almageſt that he hath proved in his Chronology that this duration of the world could not be extended farther than 4076, nor determined ſhorter than the year 3993, from the Nativity of our Lord; And the moſt probable year of the intermediate ſpace betwixt theſe two periods he thinks is the year 4063. See *And Tacquet. Aſtron. lib.* 1. p. 46. This is enough to prove the variety, and uncertainty of Chronology, to which many more might be added, if it were to any purpoſe.

When will our Learned Commentators agree in their expoſitions of the dark and obſcure parts of the

the Scripture? When will they give the same sense of the Prophecies of *Daniel* and the *Revelations*? Mr. *Mede* seems to have given the fairest account of them, and yet the Learned Dr. *More* dissents from him in many of his interpretations, as well as from Dr. *Hammond*, and his admired *Hugo Grotius*. And 'tis not only among Christian Writers that this diversity is found, but even among the Jewish Doctors: I shall only give one instance thereof amongst numberless nnmbers that might be produced: and that shall be from their expositions of the 53 Chap. of *Isaiah*. *Abravanel* in his enquiry concerning the Subject of that Prophecy tells us, that many of their Wise Men understand it על משיח לעתיד לבא *de Messiah venturo* and thus *Paehmanides* understands it: *Rabbi Saaidias* understands it of *Jeremy* the Prophet, and so doth *Aben Esra* and *Rabbi Menachem*, with whom *Grotius* assents, though not without some hesitation. *Jarchi* and both the *Kimchi's* (Father and Son) understand it of the Jewish Nation, which opinion he embraces and defends. *Vide eum si placet in Commentariis fol* 78. The like diversity is found among the *Mahumetans*, as those that please may find in Mr. *Pococks Specimen Historiæ Arabum*, and his notes upon it, as also in *Hottingers Historia Orientalis*.

When will the diversity of opinions concerning the Hebrew Points receive a determination? *Capellus* in his *Arcanum punctationis* asserts the novelty of them, so doth our Learned *Walton*. *Buxtorfius Junior* asserts them in his *Anti Critica*, *Capellus* defends

fends his opinion with acrimony and ſcorn enough towards his adverſary, as may be ſeen throughout his whole defence; *Buxtorfius* replies again, and the Controverſy is not yet ended, nor I think like to be. Theſe things Create no diſputes among Carpenters and Maſons, among Plough-men and Carters, and Perſons that live in an utter ignorance of them, but they are, and will be controverſies among the Learned, till *Elias* come.

And are there not as many controverſies, varieties, and uncertainties in natural Philoſophy, as in what I have already mentioned? are not all things variouſly argued there, and are not mens Judgments in thoſe matters as multifarious as their Perſons in them? Have not *DesCharres*, and ſome other Philoſophers of late overturned the whole Syſteme of the Ariſtotelian Philoſophy, and may not others do the like by what they have eſtabliſhed, and are there not as great objections lying againſt their Novel Syſtemes, as againſt thoſe that they have rejected? Or are the minds of ingenious, and inquiſitive men any more ſatisfied in the one, than in the other?

Are Phyſicians agreed in the nature of Simples, Drugs, and Minerals? have they any fixed Method for the Cure of Diſeaſes? are they agreed in the Nature and Cauſes of them? Can they tell what cauſeth Convulſions, and Epilepſies? Are they agreed, or ſatisfied in what Dr. *Willis* hath diſcourſed concerning them? Do they know what cauſes an Ague, or in what part of the body, and in what veſſels

veſſels thereof that *Fomes* lies, which at ſtated times ferments, and produces thoſe various Symptomes? Are they agreed in their judgments about theſe things, or are they ever like to be? Do we not find new methods of Curing Diſeaſes propounded every day, which after they have had their turn upon the Stage, they go off, and others ſucceed them.

As the varieties in natural Philoſophy are many, and the differences among thoſe that converſe therein innumerable, ſo are there the like among the Writers and Students in Metaphyſicks. What is there in that Science that is not variouſly argued and diſputed? When will they be agreed about the Principle of Individuals, about the nature & number of Cauſes, about Quantity, Habits, Relations, and other things paſt count and number? When will they with one conſent tell us the difference between the Decrees and Eſſence of God, whether it be real virtual, relative, or by extrinſick denomination?

To theſe varieties and differences in Science, add thoſe that are found among Mathematicians in Aſtronomy, and other parts of Mathematical Learning. When will they be agreed about the Diameter and Circumference of the Earth, when will they tell us how many miles we muſt move Northward, ere the pole be elevated one degree higher than 'tis in the place of our preſent abode and habitation? When will they determine the quantity of the paralacktical Angle of the Sun? Is it two degrees, or three degrees, and ſome prime minutes, as *Alhategnius* will have it; or is it only 14 or 15, ſeconds

conds as *Vendeline* determines it; or at the moſt but 30 ſeconds even when the Sun is neareſt the Earth as *Tacquet* reſolves it? *Aſtron lib.* 3. p. 131. 132. When will they fix the diſtance of the Sun and Moon from the Earth, and from each other? when will they determine the number of the Earths Semidiameters, by which theſe diſtances may be meaſured? when will they agree in the height and extenſion of the Atmoſphere, and how much the Diameter thereof exceeds that of the Earth, in its length and extenſion? when will they conſent in the proportion that the ſeveral planetary Orbs have to each other, with many other queſtions of like nature and uncertainty, too many to mention?

If the variety of mens Judgments in matters of Humane Learning and Philoſophy be ſo great, it cannot reaſonably be expected, that they ſhould be one and the ſame in the Doctrins of Religion. There are as great depths, and as many unfathomleſs abyſſes in Religion, as in any part of Learning or Philoſophy; and indeed thoſe very things that are difficulties in Religion, at leaſt ſome of them, are not peculiar to Chriſtianity, but were the ſame before it was known in the world, and are indeed difficulties in Philoſophy, as much as in Religion. Such are the difficulty of reconciling the Divine Preſcience and Decrees with Liberty & Contingence, or the Liberty of mans will with the Infallibility of Gods; Such is the original of Evil, and many things about the nature and acts of God, and therefore whil'ſt there are controverſies and obſcurities in the one, there will

will be in the other. The things themſelves being mixed and blended, the Obſcurities that attend them muſt be mingled and confounded alſo.

In brief; There is nothing but a profound Ignorance that can make Men of one Judgment (pardon the expreſſion, for 'tis Catachreſtical and improper) in the obſcure, dark, and unneceſſary Doctrines of Religion. This is obvious among the Papiſts themſelves; for though the common People, which are kept in Ignorance, and not permitted to read the Bible, manage no Controverſies concerning Points of Religion, nor are divided in their Judgments about them; yet their Learned Men are at as great Differences, and there are as great Feuds among them, as among Proteſtants, unleſs it be in ſuch things where their Intereſt unites them. This is ſufficiently known by all Learned men, what everlaſting Quarrels there are between the *Jeſuites* and *Dominicans*, the *Janſeniſts* and *Moliniſts*, and many other Orders among them; inſomuch that his infallible Holineſs himſelf durſt not determine them, for fear of diſobliging the one or the other Party of them.

Ignorance indeed keeps men quiet, and free from raiſing Controverſies, and running into variety of Judgments. Plough-men & Carters, do not uſe to differ about the ſignification of words in the Greek, Hebrew, and Oriental Languages, but Linguiſts do, and will everlaſtingly differ about them. Tradeſmen and Farmers have no Debates about the paſſing of things out of a State of Poſſibility

into a State of Futurity; or whether there needs a Decree of God for the effecting of it. The Mercers and Haberdaſhers are not divided in their Opinions about the variation of the Sun's fartheſt declination, the mutation of his Excentricity, or the unequal Motion of his Apoge. Theſe are things they pretend no knowledge in, and therefore they entertain no diverſity of Sentiments concerning them: But Aſtronomers have been of different Judgments in all theſe things, as may be ſeen in the Author lately quoted, *pag.* 45. 37.

SECT. VIII.

YET after all that I have ſaid to evince the Improbability, or rather Impoſſibility of Union among Chriſtians in many things, eſpecially ſuch as are dark and doubtful, and of little uſe or neceſſity, I do not intend to affirm that Chriſtians can agree in nothing, or that all Uniformity of Judgment is impoſſible and impracticable among them; no, I do with much aſſurance ſay, That Chriſtians may, do, and will agree in all the Eſſential and Conſtituent Parts of Chriſtianity, and that Peace and Love may be maintained notwithſtanding very great variety of Opinions, and ſome different practices too in other things.

That Chriſtians will agree in the great Eſſentials of Chriſtian Religion, is apparent; for they do ſo. *Greeks* and *Romans*, with all the ſeveral Subdiviſions that are among them, do conſent in one

one Common Creed, Rule of Life, and Compendium of Prayer and Devotion; all *Proteſtants*, *Calviniſts*, *Lutherans*, and *Arminians*, or by whatever other title they may be known or called, comient with them in the great *Agenda*, *Credenda*, & *Petenda* in Religion. In theſe things there is no diverſity among them; thoſe things are ſo obvious in the Scripture, and many of them in the Light of Nature, and by the Providence of God have been ſo ſuperintended, that in the greateſt detections of the Church, and Apoſtacy of Chriſtians, the knowledge and belief of them hath been preſerved and continued amongſt all.

Yea I am paſt doubt, that if only theſe things were made the Conditions of Communion among Chriſtians, with Liberty of Difference in other things, and ſome variety of practices in particular Churches, more Unity, Peace and Love would thereby be produced, and Knowledge, Piety and Godlineſs be more advanced than by any other means in the world. In the daies of the Apoſtles, and in ſome Ages after them, perſons were admitted into the Chriſtian Church, upon their belief and conſent to theſe few plain things; yea upon a bare conſent to the Contents of the Baptiſmal Covenant; and whilſt they continued that Conſent and Faith, they were continued in the Communion of Chriſtians; and I do not yet underſtand why men may not be Chriſtians, and partake in the Communion of Chriſtians upon the ſame terms now as then; I think the Apoſtles

were as wiſe men, and knew as well what they did, as any that have come after them in the Government of the Church; and I do not as yet ſee any reaſon why their Laws and Conditions of Communion ſhould be altered. I am afraid the alteration of them hath done more hurt, and occaſioned more miſchief to the Church of God, than they that were the Authors thereof will be able to give a fair account of to God Almighty one day.

It is not to be doubted, but that there was great diverſity of Opinions (and ſome diverſity of Practices) in things of inferiour nature among Chriſtians, and among Churches, even in the Primitive Church; The Jewiſh and Gentile Converts had not the ſame Opinions, nor were not of the ſame Judgment; Some differences there were among them, both in Opinion and Practice, as is obvious in the Scripture: And St. *Paul* allowed it, and communicated with them therein. And thus it was in the Ages ſubſequent to the Apoſtles, as *Euſebius* reports from the Letter of *Ireneus* to *Victor* Biſhop of *Rome*, *lib.* 5. *cap.* 24. *Victor* had Excommunicated the *Aſiatick* Churches, becauſe they would not obſerve *Eaſter* after the *Roman* manner, for which *Ireneus* Biſhop of *Lyons* in *France* reproves and admoniſhes him not to Excommunicate and Cut off whole Churches, for obſerving the Tradition of their Fathers; for they had alwaies obſerved it on the fourteenth day of the Month, and would not change it, to comply with

with the *Roman* Cuſtom, who obſerved it on the Lord's Day. *Ireneus* tells *Victor*, That there was not only a Controverſie about the Time of Obſerving *Eaſter*, but alſo about the Obſervation of the Faſt that did precede it; ſome thinking themſelves obliged to obſerve one, ſome two, ſome more, and ſome forty Daies; and this variety was not a Novel Cuſtom lately introduced, but had been ſuch long before in the Times of their Progenitors and Predeceſſors; but this brake no Peace, though they differed about the Number of the Daies of Faſting. ἡ διαφωνία τ νηςείας τὴν ὁμόνοιαν τ πίςεως συνίςησι, *The diverſity of the Faſt did commend the Agreement of Faith.* He adds that *Hyginus*, *Anicetus*, *Pius*, *Zyſtus*, and *Teleſphorus*, which Ruled the Church of *Rome* before him, though they never obſerved *Eaſter* after the Cuſtom of the *Aſiatiques* nor permitted it to be done in their Church, yet they kept Peace with thoſe that came to them from other Churches where it was ſo obſerved; and gives inſtance in *Polycarpus*, who being at *Rome* in the time of *Anicetus*, was treated by him with Love and Honour, and permitted to conſecrate the Euchariſt in his Church: And if Biſhops and Church-men, were as humble, pious, & peaceable as thoſe two Biſhops were, there might be the ſame Peace among them and their Churches, though they differed in ſome Cuſtoms, Practices, and Obſervations.

I know no more reaſon that Biſhops and Churches ſhould quarrel one with another for the

ſake of ſome differing Opinions and Practices, than that they ſhould quarrel about the difference in their bodily ſtrength and ſtature (I have inſtanced in the face before) or the various ſorts of Faſhions and Ornaments wherewith they are covered and adorned. Were it not a pleaſant thing to obſerve men huffing, and raging, anathematizing, & curſing each other, becauſe one wears brown coloured Cloth, and another wears Gray; one wears Serge, and another Freeze; one buckles his Shoes, and another ties them with Strings? And are not many of the Contentions of Chriſtendom indeed founded and eſtabliſhed upon Reaſons of equal weight and value? Are not moſt of the unchriſtian Feuds and Heats that are in *England*, of this ſort and kind? What if one man ſits at the holy Sacrament, another ſtands, and another kneels? Is not a Unity of Affection and Faith reconcilable with this diverſity of geſture? What if one man reads his Prayers, and another repeats them from his Memory? What if one man uſes a Form, and another prayes Extemporately? may they not believe the Common Faith, and live in Love and Peace together? I am ſure this may be, and if it be not ſo, 'tis not hard to tell what is the reaſon of it, nor where the blame muſt be laid.

If Peace and Love may be preſerved, amidſt ſome diverſity of Opinions, in the leſſer things of Religion, and ſome variety of Practices, alſo (as I am very ſure it may, if nothing elſe do hinder it) it may be hoped that the Chriſtian world may enjoy

joy ſome quiet once again, and loſt Charity, Love and Kindneſs may revive among the Diſciples and Servants of the God of Love and Peace; but if nothing will ſatisfie the Guides and Rulers of Chriſtendom, but Uniformity in all things; and no Liberty be given for ſome diverſities of Practices, there will be, nor can be, any Peace or Concord upon Earth; for Chriſtians never will agree in many things; nor is it morally poſſible they ſhould, as I have evinced (I ſuppoſe) at large already.

The truth is, the idle Dream, the fond Imagination of a poſſibility of making Chriſtians of one uniform Judgment and Practice, hath filled the Chriſtian world with variance, ſtrife and contentions, with blood, violence, rapine, and oppreſſion, with proſcriptions and baniſhment: Yea hath left little more than the name of Chriſtian Religion in moſt parts of the world. For that men may be of one Judgment and Practice in Religion, there muſt be Impoſitions, and theſe Impoſitions muſt be inforced by Laws, and the contempt or breach of theſe Laws muſt be penal, and thoſe penalties muſt be ſharp and ſevere, and ſeverely executed, and ſo bring us to ſuch a paſs, or elſe they are only Maukings, and men will laugh at them, and differ ſtill as much as ever.

And ſure it is, that men fearing God, will not debauch their Conſciences, nor ſin againſt God, they will not hazard their Souls to preſerve and ſecure their Lives, their Bodies, and their Eſtates;

they will not run the hazard of being damned everlaſtingly, to eſcape the temporary puniſhment of impoſing and domineering Rulers and Churchmen; and therefore they muſt be impriſoned, fined, baniſhed, hanged, and damned too, if it were in the power of their good Friends and Proſecutors to do it. And theſe are the bleſſed Effects of Tyrannical Impoſitions; theſe the means of Peace, Union and Concord among Chriſtians and Churches. But I would fain learn who taught them theſe means, waies and methods of Peace, Unity and Concord. Of all the Creatures upon Earth, a man would ſuſpect they learned it from the Devil, who was a murtherer from the beginning; ſurely they never learnt them from the holy Jeſus, for he never uſed any ſuch methods of Peace, nor taught any ſuch to his Diſciples that I can find in the Goſpels. *Ye know not what manner of ſpirit you are of.*

And what follows? When they have baniſhed, ruined, burnt and murthered all the Diſſenters of one Age, the next Age furniſhes them with more, to exerciſe their Cruelty upon, and imploy their Rage which they call by the name of Love and and Zeal for Union and Peace: And thus for the maintenance of their Impoſitions and an Imaginary Peace by the means thereof, they are obliged to live in perpetual War, and to maintain ſome Legions in conſtant pay, to ruine and deſtroy thoſe which are much better than themſelves, and dearer to God and Chriſt, as they may alſo dearly know

know when they come to account to him for it.

But if they chance to ruine all Diſſenters, and none ariſe in ſucceſſion to them, then muſt men grow to a careleſneſs & indifferency in all Religion; they ſhall retain the name, and perform and exerciſe ſome of the exteriour parts and formalities thereof, but as for the Power of it, and a conſciencious reverence and veneration for the Authority and Laws thereof, they are utter ſtrangers thereunto. Impoſitions and Proſecutions upon the breach of thoſe Laws that do enforce them, puts a period to all ſearch and enquiry; it gives a check to all endeavours after an Encreaſe in Knowledge: For if men uſe the means thereof, they will differ in their Sentiments and Apprehenſions, and thoſe differences will expoſe them to the publick Rods and Axes; and therefore they muſt grow utterly negligent therein, chuſing rather to be ignorant with ſecurity, than to obtain Knowledge to their ruine and deſtruction; and whatever puts a period to all endeavours after Knowledge and Underſtanding, doth certainly ruine and deſtroy the Power of Religion. For Ignorance introduces Irreligion, Formality, and Superſtition, but is no Mother to, or promoter of true, internal, hearty Religion and Devotion. And this is one of the diſmal Effects that Impoſitions and Laws for the inforcing of men have had in Popiſh Countries, eſpecially in *Spain* and *Italy*. There's nothing left in thoſe Countries, but the name of Chriſtianity, and ſome outſide Formalities of Worſhip and Devotion;

votion; they know nothing of the Power of it: And I am not without fears, that if the preſent Impoſitions in *England* be continued, and the Laws proſecuted, and Diſſenters ruined and deſtroyed thereby, that (unleſs God raiſe up others) the Life and Power of Religion will decay, and Tepidity, Formality, & Indifferency, with an encreaſe of Senſuality and Prophaneneſs ſucceed thereunto.

And really, ſuch a State peradventure may be acceptable enough to ſome men; for ſo they may live in Plenty and Peace, and have what may careſs their ſenſes, and pleaſe and gratifie their luſts, they care not much what becomes of the Honour of God, or the Souls of Men. Thus 'tis in Popiſh Countries; the Pope and his Cardinals, the Biſhops, Abbots, and moſt of the Clergy, live in Honour, and at eaſe; they abound in all things that are grateful to the Fleſh; they withhold not their hearts from any Joy; but whether the People ſerve God or the Devil, whether they be ſaved or damned, is very little their concernment. Let them believe as the Church believes; let them be obedient to the Orders thereof; let them advance no Opinions contrary to its Inſtitutions, and for other things they are at liberty, and may do as they liſt. There is no ſin like Inconformity, and breaking the Orders and tyrannous Impoſitions of the Church. They may break all God's Commandments with more ſecurity than any one of them. Some there be do not fear to ſay, That there are

others

others in the world that are much of the humour of thoſe Catholick Gentlemen; and many there be that do not know very well how to confute them.

Let it not be ſaid that I impute all ſerioufneſs in Religion, to variety and differences of Judgment and Opinion; I mean no ſuch thing. I impute it to an encreaſe of Knowledge, and skill in the Scriptures and Doctrine of Chriſtianity, to which diverſity of Opinions, and ſome diverſity in Practices too is, for ought that I can ſee, unavoidable; nor is there any way of preventing one without the other. This the Papiſts ſee well enough, and therefore forbid the Reading of the Scripture to the Vulgar; and ſome Proteſtants ſee it too. See Biſhop *Bramhall's* Vindication againſt Mr. *Baxter*, *who ſhall ſcape fairly* (he ſays) *if none caſt it in his teeth, that the promiſcuous licence which they give to all ſorts of people, qualified or unqualified, not only to Read, but to Interpret the Scripture according to their private ſpirit, or particular fancies, without any regard either to the Analogy of Faith which they underſtand not, or the Interpretation of Doctors of former Ages, is more prejudicial, I might better ſay pernitious, both to particular Chriſtians, and to whole Societies, than the over rigorous reſtraint of the* Romaniſt. *p.* 116, 117. There are more may ſee it in due time, and 'tis to be ſuſpected, that thoſe that commend that Book, and have eſpouſed ſome other notions of that Author, concerning Patriarchal Power, and the Obligation

to

to obey the Laws of Univerſal Councils, till they be repealed, (which how they ſhall be I cannot tell) may have ſome kindneſs for the ſame Opinion, and ſome illuminations concerning it, though it be too early in the morning, as yet to propoſe them to publick Conſideration.

However I have entertained the perſuaſion which I think I am not ſo like to forſake, that Knowledge with ſerious Piety, and Godlineſs, though mixed with ſome real Errours, Diviſions, and Miſtakes (for in variety of judgment concerning the ſame things all cannot be true) is more eligible, than Union, and ſameneſs of apprehenſion, with Ignorance, Prophaneneſs, Formality, and a form of Godlineſs without the Power of it. A living man, though ſomething miſhapen and deformed, is better than a lifeleſs Statue, though it be never ſo beautiful and comely; and moſt Parents had rather have their Children alive, though by their little pieviſh humours and quarrels, they give them ſome trouble and vexation, than to be deprived of them, having nothing but their pictures and lifeleſs Marbles, which never need their Umpirage to reconcile their animoſities and waſpiſh feuds.

SECT. IX.

BUT what means all this Diſcourſe? Why this is the meaning of it. *Union* and *Peace* among Chriſtians is a very fine thing, and greatly deſireable;

able; but ſo various are the Underſtandings, and ſo great and inveterate are the prejudices of men, that Union of Judgment can never be expected, with any probability, unleſs in a few, plain, neceſſary things. *Peace*, *Union*, and *Love* was preſerved in the Chriſtian Church in the *Primo*-Primitive times, upon ſuch terms, upon the conſent unto, and agreement in a few, plain, neceſſary things. Thoſe were thought then ſufficient, and they are ſo ſtill, though the belief of it be periſhed from among men. Thoſe perſons that ſuſpend the Peace of the Church, upon many dark, uſeleſs, and controverted Propoſitions and Doctrines, and will proſecute all Diſſenters by ſevere and ſanguinary Laws, (I will ſay it over again) do but take a fair way to deſtroy the Church of God, and leave nothing but the empty Name of Religion in the World.

You will ſay, What then would you have? Would you have all men left at liberty, to believe and do as they liſt in Religion? Would you have no Laws or Rules be impoſed upon the Judgments and Faith of men? Shall they be permitted to believe and publiſh what Doctrines they pleaſe? Before I make any Anſwer to this Objection, I ſhall with all humility beſeech both our Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Governours, eſpecially the latter, (whoſe Government certainly is paternal) that before they make Laws and Rules for the Conſciences of men, they would a little conſider,

1. *The Weakneſs, Impotence, and Depravation of humane Minds.* Methinks thoſe that govern the

the Churches of *Chriſtendom*, ſeem to have very little ſenſe of the common Calamity of Mankind; they ſeem to have forgotten the great and lamentable Imperfections of the whole poſterity of *Adam*: Are not the Underſtandings of moſt men pittifully blind and dark? Are they not ſtrangely impotent and weak, yea, unable to diſcern ſometimes the cleareſt Evidence and Light? Are they not ſtrongly influenced by Education, Company, Intereſt, and many other things? Do not mens Luſts and Paſſions very much influence and ſway their Intellects? And are not their apprehenſions of things very much formed by them? This I do acknowledge is a fault, but 'tis a common fault, and ſurely ſome conſideration ought to be had of it, in the making and impoſing Laws and Creeds, upon the Conſciences of men.

2. *The very great Trouble, Tiranny, and Vexation of a ſcrupulous Conſcience.* They that have had to do with thoſe kind of perſons, know ſomething of it, but none underſtand it fully but thoſe that have had experience thereof. The burthen, the trouble, the anguiſh, and the torment of it is not to be expreſſed; the ſeverity of its Laſhes, the rigour of its Rule and Dominion, is almoſt inſupportable. Perſons of this temper there have always been, and will be, and though ſome incompaſſionate men, (whoſe Bowels ſeem to be made of Braſs) laugh at them, and ridicule their tenderneſs and ſcruples, yet I do believe that Church-Governours (who ſhould be Fathers to their

their People) ought to have ſome reſpect unto them in their Conſtitutions and Impoſitions.

3. *The impoſſibility of moſt mens giving aſſent with judgment to things controverted, difficult and obſcure.* Let men ſay what they liſt, 'tis not conviction that makes moſt men aſſent either way in the difficult controverſies of Religion. Do moſt men, yea moſt Clergy men, give their aſſent in the controverſies between Remonſtrants and Contra-Remonſtrants, out of conviction of Judgment? No: Thoſe things are of ſuch profound and deep Speculation, that very few men have either leiſure, Books or Brains to fathom them, and make a judgment of them. The Controverſie about the difference between Biſhops and Prebyters, whether it be a difference in Order or in Degree, requires ſo much reading and skill in ancient Authors, Fathers and Councils, with the debates of Neotericks, that many men are not able with any ſettled judgment, to determine on the one ſide or the other. T'is true, that ſome of the Church have lately, with great confidence, without diſpute, concluded a difference of *Order* between them, and we muſt now believe it with as much aſſurance as the Apoſtles Creed: yet I ſee no juſt reaſon to doubt, but that the Controverſie will remain longer than our Eſtabliſhment, & peradventure there may have been, and ſtill are as great men, and as well skilled in ancient Learning, as the late and preſent Biſhops, that are of the contrary perſuaſion. I might inſtance in many of their Controverſies at this time, but this ſhall ſuffice;

ſuffice, for I am perſuaded, that all men that have impartially ſtudied, and thought of theſe matters, and made obſervation on the underſtandings of men, muſt acknowledge, that very few men of free judgments, can be brought to a full agreement in controverted and obſcure points of Religion: And as ſo the moſt conſequently, that ſubſcribe to what is impoſed becauſe they muſt, they do generally ſubſcribe to things which *Combien entiendan come puerca de freno, they are as well skill'd in as a Sow in a Bridle*, as ſays the *Spaniard*.

4. *The incongruouſneſs of Laws, Penalties, and Executions, to make men wiſe, or give them largeneſs of underſtanding, to bring them to this Concord.* Will Laws and Penalties give Eyes to the Blind, or Ears to the Deaf? Or will they enable a weak and impaired Eye to ſee Hairs, or the Webs of Spiders? Will they enable the quickeſt ſight to ſee the Woods and Forreſts, the Rocks and Mountains, the Towns and Villages, the Caſtles and Forts that are in the Moon? Laws and Penalties may ſometimes put men on ſtudy and conſideration, (though I think 'tis not very often, they rather warm and enrage mens Spirits, and put them upon the defence of their own Opinions, than on the conſideration of the truth of thoſe that are impoſed on their aſſent and Faith) but they can never make men underſtand beyond their Capacities: All the Teaching and Inſtruction in the World will not make ſome men wiſe and learned, and what Inſtruction can't do, I am ſure Laws will not do.

5. *The*

5. *That Laws and Executions may make ſome men Lie and Diſſemble, and Conſent againſt their Conſciences to Impoſitions: but of all men ſuch are the ſharpeſt and moſt inraged Enemies*; And none upon Earth will be more ready to revenge themſelves upon the Impoſers, than they will be, whenever an opportunity be offered to them. Thus in the Daies of Queen *Mary*, many diſſembled, and aſſented to the *Roman* Impoſitions, to preſerve their Eſtates and Lives, but they retained their Old Opinions, and conceived a mortal hatred againſt thoſe that put them on thoſe ſtraits and difficulties, as Dr. *Burnet* obſerves (*Hiſt. Refor. part* 2. *page* 364): And there is no doubt but they were the keeneſt, and moſt eager Enemies to the *Romaniſts*, in the Daies of Queen *Elizabeth*, when they had the opportunity of revenging themſelves upon them.

6. That *it is not impoſſible, but the ſame meaſure that ſome mete to others, may be meaſured to them again*; *and that thoſe that Impoſe upon the Faith and Conſciences of others, may be impoſed upon themſelves with the ſame, yea far greater Tyranny and Rigour.* The Papiſts are endeavouring to ſubvert our Government and Religion; they have had Deſigns upon the Perſon and Life of our Soveraign, and ſome men think they ſtill have; and I know no reaſon to imagine that they have forſaken them, unleſs they be convinced in their Judgments that there is no poſſibility of proſpering, or being ſucceſsful therein, which

why they ſhould be, I confeſs I do not underſtand. 'Tis true, a man would think they ſhould find mighty difficulties in accompliſhing their Plot, but it muſt be conſidered that we have been, and ſtill are a ſinful Nation. We have exceedingly provoked the Majeſty of Heaven, and whether or no for the ſake of our Iniquities, God may not give us up into the hands of our Popiſh Enemies, I cannot tell; I am ſure we have deſerved it; and if he hath determined to puniſh us for our ſins, by delivering us up to the *Roman* Scourge and Tyranny, 'tis to no purpoſe to talk of difficulties; they ſhall be the Rod in his hand, and he will chaſtiſe us in deſpite to all the oppoſition that we can make againſt it.

7. That *God who is the great Sovereign and Governour of the whole Univerſe, does ſuffer or permit many things in this Inferiour World, which he doth not approve, propoſing himſelf a Pattern to Rulers.* God ſuffers much among Heathens and Infidels, much among profeſſed Chriſtians, yea and many things he paſſes by in thoſe that are truly his Children; *He knoweth their frame, he conſidereth that they are but duſt.* God is not ſevere, nor doth puniſh every fault and miſcarriage among mortals; and ſurely thoſe that are his Vicegerents here on Earth, and repreſent him, would do well to imitate the Example of the moſt Supreme Lord of all; or at leaſt I think 'twere not amiſs to be as equally ſevere againſt Atheiſm, Prophaneneſs, groſs Immorality, and a contempt of

of all Religion, as againſt ſome ſmall Errours in Opinion and Differences in Practice, from the Eſtabliſhed Doctrines and Methods of Divine Worſhip preſcribed. Eccleſiaſtick Rulers (whoſe Government I have ſaid is paternal) are more eſpecially obliged to conſider this, foraſmuch as they are, or at leaſt ſhould be, beſt acquainted with the underſtanding of the Patience, Long-ſuffering and Forbearance of God: But all ſhould conſider it, foraſmuch as all have experience of it, and muſt have, or they are undone. Civil and Eccleſiaſtick Governours both have experience of much Indulgence and Connivance from God Almighty, and they have ſtill great need of more; and 'twere well that they which enjoy and need ſo much, would impart and communicate ſome degree and meaſure of it towards others.

8. That *the requiring of greater Uniformity in Opinion and Practice in the things of Religion, than the Church of God is capable of, is no means of Union, Peace, or Concord, but a moſt effectual and certain means of Diviſion, Separation, Strife and Contention.* The Chriſtian World hath found this true by ſad and lamentable Experience, and there is no man of ſenſe or brains, but may eaſily perceive it, if he apply himſelf to the conſideration of it. Were it a likely way to promote Peace in a Kingdom, yea or in a ſingle Town or Village, to oblige all the Inhabitants thereof by Laws, Penalties and Executions, to learn and

ſpeak the *Greek*, the *Chaldee*, or the *Arabick* Language, and no other? Are they capable of it? or have they Time, Leiſure, Wit, or Helps ſufficient to obtain a skill and dexterity in it? Have they Teachers to inſtruct them in the meaning, reading and pronunciation of it? Or ſuppoſing they had Teachers, Have they all of them opportunity, leiſure, or capacities for it? Would this make Union, Peace, or Concord amongſt them? Or would it not certainly mutiny, trouble and divide them? No more is it any probable means of making Peace, Union, and Concord among Chriſtians, to oblige them to think, ſpeak, and do the ſame things, in the many doubtful and Controverted Caſes and Points of Religion and Worſhip in agitation among us? Are their minds all of the ſame ſhape and ſize? Are they all of equal capacity and comprehenſion? Yea, are the minds of all Clergy-men of equal quickneſs and perſpicuity? Are they of the ſame vigour? And have they the ſame advantages for the improvement and cultivation of them? Or are Impoſitions likely to unite them? Or are they not rather a ſure Means, and certain Engine of Diviſion and Separation? 'Tis morally impoſſible that men ſhould have the ſame thoughts and apprehenſions in the Controverſies of Chriſtianity, as I have ſaid and proved in the preceding Diſcourſe; and if the Governours of Churches will require things impoſſible, they may eaſily perceive that it is not the way to make Peace, but War; not Union,

but

but Diviſion; not Love and Friendſhip, but Hatred, Variance, and Striſes: For though ſome will aſſent to all that they require, out of Intereſt, and for their Advantage; others, by the hope of a fair and paſſable Interpretation; others will run with the Herd, and ſwallow all without any chewing or conſideration; yet there will be men of tender, ſcrupulous, and ſevere Conſciences, that will everlaſtingly diſſent from them. I do humbly conceive ſome regard ought to be had to ſuch perſons by Governours in their Impoſitions, and that thoſe that are moſt afraid of offending God, ſhould not for that very reaſon be expoſed to the greateſt Sufferings and Calamities.

9. That *it ſeems ſomething hard, that it ſhould be in the power of Church-Governours (who have all their Power for Edification, not for Deſtruction) to make men Schiſmaticks at their liſt and pleaſure; and yet ſo it is, if they may Impoſe what Controverted, Doubtful, and Unneceſſary Doctrines and Practices they pleaſe, upon the Belief and Obſervation of men.* If this be granted, thoſe that are Good and Catholick Chriſtians this day, may be a company of Schiſmaticks to morrow; 'tis but the Impoſing of ſome Doubtful Opinions on their Faith, and ſome Suſpicious Actions upon their Practice, and the work is done. And on this Suppoſition 'tis come to paſs, that all the Chriſtian World are by ſome part or other thereof, accounted Schiſmaticks. The *Romaniſts* account

all Schiſmaticks, that refuſe and diſſent from their Impoſitions. The Proteſtants are of ſeveral Judgments, and various Practices, and are more than enough ſevere in their Cenſures of each other. Some ſeem to account all thoſe Churches Schiſmatical, that have no Biſhops, or Epiſcopal Ordination; others think them Schiſmatical that do aſſert the neceſſity of it, and will Impoſe the Belief and Practice thereof. The Caſe being thus, an honeſt and ſober man would be ſhrewdly tempted to think, that God never gave any Power to Church-Governours to Impoſe Doubtful and Unneceſſary things upon the Belief and Practice of Chriſtians, and thereby make Schiſms, Separations and Diviſions at their pleaſure; but that all the Power they have, is to Command and Impoſe things plain, neceſſary, and certain; and that thoſe are enough to maintain the Churches Peace.

10. That *it ſeems very hard alſo, that men that believe all the Antient Creeds, aſſent to all the Fundamental Articles of the Chriſtian Religion, and live a pious and holy Life, denying all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, living righteouſly, ſoberly and godly in this world, ſhould be denyed the Communion of the Church: And yet thus it may, and thus it doth happen, by reaſon of the Impoſition of ſome Doubtful and Unneceſſary things.* Thus 'tis in *England*; let a man be ſound in the Faith, and live an Angelical Life, in the exerciſe of all kinds of Chriſtian Virtues, yet if he ſcruples

Kneeling

Kneeling at the holy Sacrament, he may not partake in it; if he doubts the lawfulneſs of Godfathers, and Godmothers, or the uſe of the Sign of the Croſs in Baptiſm, he may not have his Child Baptized, or admitted into the Church of God, though he be a perſon ſound in Judgment, and of unblameable and exemplary Converſation in all Godlineſs and Honeſty. No Clergy-man can officiate in the Church, that ſuſpects or doubts any thing in the Liturgy, Book of Ordination, and Articles, to be contrary to the Word of God; beſides ſome other Subſcriptions which a thinking man may be able to find ſuch difficulties in, that he cannot anſwer to his own ſatisfaction. Be his Abilities never ſo great, be his Deſires to ſerve God in the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus never ſo warm, lively and paſſionate; yea though he have been ſolemnly devoted thereunto, he muſt not come near the Altar, nor meddle with any Publick Miniſtrations, for the promoting the Honour of God, and the Salvation of Souls. The greateſt skill in Languages and Philoſophy; the largeſt knowledge in Fathers, Councils, Hiſtories, and the latter Books and Writings of Divines, joyned with uncorrupt Faith, and an unblemiſhed Life, are not ſufficient qualifications for the Prieſthood. The Impoſitions muſt be all ſwallowed, or the Candidates for it may go feed Swine. For the Flocks of God (which he hath purchaſed with his own blood) they ſhall not feed, though there be no others to ſubſtitute in

the Room of them, and they wander, go aſtray, and periſh eternally by the want of Teachers and Inſtructers.

SECT. 10.

HAving beſought our Civil, and moſt eſpecially our Eccleſiaſtical Governours, to conſider theſe few things now diſcourſed, I proceed to make ſome Anſwer to the Objection; *What would you have?* And in general I reply, I am no Advocate for Univerſal Liberty, that men ſhould be left to believe, ſpeak, and do as they liſt. I would not that permiſſion ſhould be given to any to blaſpheme God, ridicule the Chriſtian Religion, decry and burleſque all Morality, and laugh at the day of Judgment, and a State of Rewards and Puniſhments. I would not that men ſhould be permitted to Preach Rebellion, and Mutiny the People againſt their Prince; nor that they ſhould be allowed to ſow Sedition, or teach ſuch Doctrine as will ſubvert Order, and deſtroy all Peace among men; for theſe things, and others of like nature, I am no Patron. Let theſe be prevented by all juſt care and endeavours, and let ſuch as offend in any of them undergo the ſharpeſt puniſhments.

But *in particular*, for ſatisfaction to this grand Query or Objection, as being the chief buſineſs of my undertaking, I humbly propoſe theſe ſeveral things which follow.

1. That nothing be Made or Impoſed as Conditions

ditions of Communion, but a few plain, obvious and neceſſary things. In theſe Concord among Chriſtians may be expected, and will be found, but in many Doubtful and Unneceſſary things it is impoſſible. Grammarians, Hiſtorians, Natural Philoſophers, and Mathematicians, agree in ſome things. There are certain Axioms, common Notions, and Propoſitions, in which they do mutually conſent, whatever their Differences be in thouſands of other things. In ſome few, great, plain, and uſeful things, Chriſtians do and will agree, though in many things of leſs certainty, uſe and importance, they may and will differ to the worlds end. *Exiſtimat ejus Majeſtas nullam ad incundam concordiam breviorem fore viam, quam ſi diligenter ſeparentur neceſſaria a non neceſſariis; & ut de neceſſariis conveniat, omnis opera inſumatur, in non neceſſariis Chriſtianæ libertati locus detur.* Epiſt. *Cauſaboni ad Card. Perronium. p.* 31.

Let the things Impoſed as Terms and Conditions of Communion, be the Great, Eſſential, and Conſtituent Parts of Chriſtianity: Let them be ſuch as are of the Eſſence of Religion; ſuch as without Aſſent and Conſent unto, no man is, or can be a Chriſtian. That Religion (I mean the Chriſtian Religion) hath its Eſſential and Conſtituent Parts, cannot reaſonably be denyed; for if it have no Eſſential Parts, 'tis not *Quid Compoſitum*, 'tis no compound thing, which no man in his wits, I think, will affirm; and if it be a compound thing, it muſt have its Eſſential Parts,

diſtinguiſh-

distinguishable from those that are Integral and Accidental. We are not to be tyed up to the one as to the other. *Certainement il seroit bien à desirer qu'il n'yeust pour tout aucune diversité, ni bigarrure entre les fideles à cet regard. Mais parce que dans l'infirmité, où nous vivons en cette chair mortelle, ce bon heur est plus a souhaiter, qu' à esperer, il faut restreindre la necessité de l'union de nos sentimens aux poincts, qui sont Essentiels, & sans la creance des l' on ne peut parvenir au salut. A leur égard, tous les fideles doivent sentir une mesme, chose. Nulle ne peut y avoir de diversité sans rompre. Mais quant aux autres, qui ne sont pas de cette importance, nous devons y souffrir la diversité quand il y en a l'example de l'Apostre, qui oblige bien ci apres tous les fideles à cheminer d'une mesme ragle en ce a quoy ils estoyent parvenus, mais supporte neantmoins ceux qui aux reste sentent quelque chose autrement que luy, & les fideles parfaits, esperant que Dieu le leur revelera aussi. Comme vous voyez, que dans un estat, pourveu que tous les citoyens tiennent les maximes fondamentales, & necessaires pour la sanction des devoirs essentiels à sa conservation, l'on tolere entre eux de la diversité en plusieurs autres subjects de moindre importance.* Daille on Phil. 2. 2.

3. Let the Essential Parts of Christianity be so carefully collected, that there be no defect, nor no redundance: Let there be no defect, lest such persons as are no professed Christians, be admitted to the Communion of the Church: Let there

there be no redundance, leſt thoſe that are true Chriſtians, and believe all the Eſſentials of the Chriſtian Religion, be excluded and denyed their proper Priviledge and Right. *Jacobus Acontius* diſcourſing of a Common Creed to be uſed among all Chriſtians, and to be reputed the Teſt and Condition of Communion, ſpeaks as followeth. "*Ac oportet quidem confeſſionem ejuſmodi eſſe inſtar definitionis cujuſdam, quemadmodum enim requiritur, ut definitio neque plura complectatur, neque pauciora, quam res ipſa, quæ definitur;* (viz.) *ut nihil deſit, nihil redundet: ita in fidei ſymbolo nihil deeſſe oportet eorum quæ ſunt ad ſalutem cognitu neceſſaria; nil etiam contineri debet, abſque cujus cognitione contingere ſalus poſſit: Si deeſſet etenim aliquid cognitu neceſſarium, fieret ut qui Chriſtianus haberi non debuit, neque Eccleſiæ Dei Membrum, propterea quod profiteretur illud ſymbolum, haberetur pro Chriſtiano. Sin contineretur Symbolo aliquid non neceſſarium cognitu, uſu venire poſſet, ut qui confiterentur quæ eſſent neceſſaria, ut qui cum ſuâ qualicunque fide ſalvi eſſe poſſent, propterea quod non reciperent id abſque cujus cognitione contingere ſalus poſſit, cum eſſent pro Chriſtianis & Eccleſiæ membris agnoſcendi, rejicerentur; at ſi neque deſit, neque redundet quicquam, jam neque rejicerentur, niſi qui ſunt rejiciendi, neque recipientur, niſi qui ſunt recipiendi, atque ita aptiſſimum fuerit Symbolum, quo Chriſtiani à non Chriſtianis diſcernuntur.* Acontii Strat. Satanæ. lib. 7. pag. 366.

4 Let

4. Let ſome difference be made between a Confeſſion of Faith, and a Summary or Inſtitution of Chriſtian Religion. In a Confeſſion of Faith let nothing be inſerted which is not neceſſary to Salvation: In a Chriſtian Inſtitution all things may be diſcourſed which may be thought any way uſeful or advantageous. Whatever is mentioned in a Creed Symbol on terms of Communion, beyond what is abſolutely neceſſary, breaks the Church of God into Sects and Factions, and fills it full of quarrels, ſtrife and contentions. Thoſe that will promote the Peace of it, muſt require Aſſent and Profeſſion only to ſome few neceſſary things; and in vain do men hope or expect, that the whole Church of God ſhould be of the ſame mind in many or all things. "*In* "*confeſſione ſcribendâ, ut nihil quod omnino ſit cog-* "*nitu neceſſarium prætermittendum eſt: ita quic-* "*quid addatur non neceſſarium (etiamſi alicqui ve-* "*rum & bonum ſit) id ad Eccleſiæ diviſionem in* "*Sectas pertinet, atque ad diſcordias & rixas; qui* "*pacem & concordiam in Eccleſia vult eſſe, oportet* "*eum rerum neceſſariarum confeſſione contentum* "*eſſe; fruſtra enim ſperaverit aliquis fore unquam,* "*ut cum Dei Eccleſia tam bene agatur, ut de rebus* "*omnibus omnes idem ſentiant; quare una illa* "*reliqua eſt concordiæ ratio, ſi qui neceſſaria am-* "*plectuntur, ferant ſe mutuo, & ſuas controverſias* "*inter ſe amanter, humaniterque uti fratres, tra-* "*ctent.* Acont. ubi ſupra. pag. 367.

5. Let this Confeſſion, Creed, Symbol, or Teſt of Com-

Communion be expreſſed, as near as poſſible, in the words of Scripture. *Nihil complectatur niſi expreſſum eiſdem etiam verbis, & loquendi formulis (quoad ſciri poteſt) quibus ipſe Dei Spiritus uſus eſt* : For there may be many men that will own and ſubſcribe a Creed, or Confeſſion, expreſſed in the words of the Holy Ghoſt, which peradventure may ſcruple that which is expreſſed in our own. All Proteſtants do grant, that all things neceſſary to be believed and practiſed, are plainly and clearly revealed, and expreſſed in the holy and ſacred Volumes. What hinders then, but that our Symbol, Creed or Confeſſion, may be drawn up in the words of Scripture? Do we imagine that our own words will be more apt and proper, and fitter to obviate Hereticks than thoſe of the Holy Ghoſt? Shall we pretend to be more wiſe and cautious than the Divine Spirit? Or do we know what is more or leſs liable to Cavils and Exceptions better than God himſelf? What arrogance, madneſs, and preſumption is this? Are we wiſer than God? Or are we more prudent and adviſed than he whoſe underſtanding is infinite?

6. Let nothing be condemned or rejected in this Creed or Symbol, but what is inconſiſtent with the Faith of things abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation. Let no Errours be condemned in it, but ſuch as exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven. If Errours of inferiour nature be condemned in it, 'twill become an Engine of Diviſion, and not an Inſtrument of Peace; 'twill exclude many from

from the Communion of the Church, which ought to be received unto it, and ſo be an occaſion of Separation and Schiſm. And I know nothing almoſt that hath occaſioned more miſchief, and brought more fatal Calamities upon the Churches of Chriſt, than the enlarging of Creeds and Confeſſions, under pretence of obviating Errours and Hereſies. This one Engine hath cauſed more Schiſms and Separations, and ſhed more blood, and cauſed more deſolations than all the Heathen Perſecutions; and yet notwithſtanding the Lamentable Experience of ſo many Ages, 'tis ſtill kept in uſe: And I believe the Devil is very loth to part with it; he hath found ſuch ſucceſs and advantage by it, that he will never forſake or abandon the uſe of it, if poſſibly he can: And there are many men (and ſome that do pretend to be no Friends to him, or his Intereſts) that ſeem to be almoſt as loth to part with this bleſſed Invention as the Devil himſelf. *Optandum foret ut qui publica templa & munera occupant, in ſua confeſſione, doctrina, ceremoniis, aliiſque ſe intra primorum Chriſtianorum & Apoſtolorum ſimplicitatem & generalitatem continerent, aut duodecim illis Catholicæ Fidei Articulis, Symbolo Apoſtol. contentis, hoc eſt paucis admodum, & paucis ceremoniis, contenti eſſent, & in aliorum conſcientias Dominium non uſurparent, adeo ut omnes abſque animi offenſione publicos illos cœtus frequentare, & ibi inter ſe Euchariſtiam celebrare poſſent.* *Curcellæus* in his Preface to *Epiſcopius.*

7. Let

7. Let us know that, the things abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, and utterly inconſiſtent with it, are but few. The Learned and peaceable Author laſt but one mentioned, reckons nothing directly neceſſary, but Faith in the Son of God; and nothing inconſiſtent with it, but Unbelief of the ſame proportion. By conſequence he grants it neceſſary that we underſtand the depravation & guilt of our own lives and natures, and the purpoſe and reſolution of God to judge the Living and the Dead. *Vid. Jac. Acont. Strat. Satanæ, lib.* 3. *à pag.* 123. *ad pag.* 131. And according to theſe apprehenſions of things abſolutely neceſſary, both directly and by conſequence, he forms a Symbol, which I will propoſe to the Reader's view and conſideration in his own words.

1. "*Quod unus ſit verus Deus, & is quem* "*ille miſit Jeſus Chriſtus & Spiritus Sanctus, &* "*quod non recte negatur alius eſſe Pater, alius eſſe* "*Filius; quia Jeſus Chriſtus vere ſit Dei Filius.*

2. "*Quod homo iræ judicioque Dei ſit ob-* "*noxius; & quod reviviſcent mortui, juſti qui-* "*dem ad ſempiternam beatitudinem, impii verò* "*ad ſempiternos cruciatus.*

3. "*Quod Deus Jeſum Chriſtum Filium ſuum* "*in orbem miſerit, qui homo factus propter pec-* "*cata noſtra mortuus ſit, & propter noſtram ju-* "*ſtitiam à mortuis excitatus.*

4. "*Quod ſi crediderimus Dei Filio, per ejus* "*nomen vitam conſequuturi, ſimus.*

5. "*Quod non ſit in ullo alio ſalus, non in beata*

"*Virgine,*

" *Virgine, aut Petro, aut Paulo, aut ullo alio Sancto,*
" *vel quovis alio nomine, & quod non ſit juſtitia in*
" *Lege, neque in hominum mandatis, aut inventis.*

6. " *Quod unus ſit baptiſmus in nomine Pa-*
" *tris Filii, & Spiritus Sancti.* Vid. pag. 373. lib. 7. Edit. Oxon.

In Engliſh thus:

1. *There is one True God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, with the holy Spirit, and 'tis falſly denyed that the Father is not another, and the Son another, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt is truly the Son of God.*

2. *Man is liable to the Wrath and Judgment of God, and the Dead ſhall riſe, the Juſt to everlaſting happineſs, and the Wicked to everlaſting torments.*

3. *God ſent his Son Jeſus Chriſt into the world, who was made Man, and died for our ſins, and roſe again for our Juſtification.*

4. *If we believe in the Son of God, we ſhall obtain Life by his Name.*

5. *There is Salvation in no other, not in the bleſſed Virgin, not in* Peter, Paul, *or any other Saint or Name. There is no Righteouſneſs in or by the Law, or by the Commandments and Inventions of men.*

6. *There is one Baptiſm in the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.* I have not ſet down the Creed of this Judicious Author, as if I thought it the beſt and moſt exact that can be formed, but becauſe it is ſhort, and expreſſed in the words of Scripture,

Scripture, and an Evidence of his Judgment, that the Communion of Chriſtians, and conſequently the Peace of Churches, yea of Chriſtendom, muſt be ſuſpended, only on a few plain neceſſary things. And peradventure our Common Creed, with the Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments, as I have already intimated, might be Impoſitions ſufficient for the Union of Chriſtians and Churches.

8. Let the Miniſters of the Goſpel be obliged to declare their Faith in, and Aſſent unto, no more than ſome ſuch brief Symbol, or Confeſſion, or rather to thoſe three Summaries of Chriſtianity aboveſaid. Let them not be obliged to ſubſcribe unto a multifarious number of Articles, or to profeſs a Faith or Conſent unto them. Let them heartily believe thoſe few great things, and reduce their Faith to Practice, and perſuade others (I mean their ſeveral Congregations) to do ſo, and this will be a more effectual way of producing and preſerving Peace and Union, than any other way or means whatſoever, and with leſs miſchief and inconveniencies. 'Tis true, good, large, numerous and ſwinging Impoſitions, ratified by ſevere Laws, and proſecuted by ſomething like an Inquiſition, would peradventure ſilence more Diſputes and Controverſies; but then there are two ſmall miſchiefs conſequent thereunto, The one is, it would deſtroy the beſt part of Mankind from off the face of the Earth: The other is, it will deſtroy all ſerious Religion, and leave

nothing but an empty name or ſhadow of it in the World. And I am of the mind that ſome ſerious Religion, though attended with Controverſies and Contentions about ſome ſmaller things, is more eligible than no Religion, or an outſide Formality and Vizour of it, though accompanied with the greateſt Agreement, Union, and Sameneſs of Judgment and Apprehenſion imaginable. *Men are not Maſters of their own Perſuaſions, and cannot change their Thoughts as they pleaſe. He that believes any thing concerning Religion, cannot turn as the Prince commands him, or accommodate himſelf to the Law, or his preſent Intereſts, unleſs he arrive at that pitch of Atheiſm as to look on Religion only as a matter of Policy, or as an Engine for Civil Government.* *Burnet* in his Preface to his late Book of the Right of Princes.

9. Let Miniſterial Qualifications be ſet as high as prudently they may: Let them be required to have good Skill in the Learned Languages and Philoſophy: Let them be skilled in Hiſtory, eſpecially that of the Church: Let them know ſomething in the Controverſies of Religion, and in the Writers of the Primitive Times. And in theſe things, let them undergo a ſtrict Tryal and Examination; and if they be not found competently inſtructed in them, let them be rejected. Let it not be thought a ſufficient Qualification, to have ſeen a Univerſity, and ſpent ſome little time there. Let enquiry be made, what Advantage

tage they have made, what Learning they have obtained by the time they have ſpent there. Perſons may come as arrant Fools, and Ignorants, from thence, as they went thither, and ſometimes much more. If no place in the Miniſtry, nor Preferment in the Church were to be obtained without Learning, it would oblige young Scholars to follow their Studies, and imploy their Time in the proſecution of neceſſary Qualifications for the Miniſterial Office, that they might be capable of it: But where little elſe is required in order thereunto, but Submiſſion to the Eccleſiaſtical Yoke, and a good wide Throat that can ſwallow a *Pompion*, 'tis no wonder if nothing elſe be Learnt or Laboured after by a great many.

10. Let greater care likewiſe be taken of the Piety and Sobriety of their Converſations. *Ad Perſonarum quidem delectum quod attinet, qui ad munus ejuſmodi publicum eligi debent, tales eſſe oportet ut duo iſta in iis inveniantur, Primò, Doctrina ſana & orthodoxa, Deinde vita & mores convenientes non modo profeſſioni Religionis Chriſtianæ, verum etiam tam ſancto & ſingulari muneri. Ad hoc etenim vocantur, ut alios tum ſermone, tum vitæ exemplo doceant.* Theſes Salmur. De Miniſt. Evangel. vocatione. Let none be admitted to the Sacred Office, that are of Impious Lives, and Immoral Converſations; ſuch perſons give occaſion to men of Prophane and Atheiſtical Tempers and Inclinations, to ſcoff, ſcorn, and

deride all Religion, and burleſque it out of the World: and to others that are of pious and devout Inclinations, to forſake Publick Aſſemblies, and run after Private Meetings, and Conventicles. Theſe things are obvious, and no man that hath Eyes in his head, can very well miſs the Obſervation of them. And thus 'twill be, till greater care be taken of the Lives and Practices of thoſe that are admitted to miniſter in holy things; of which at preſent I ſee no great likelihood, ſeeing thoſe that make the fierceſt Declamations againſt Separation & Conventicles, & do ſometimes complain alſo of the Atheiſm, Prophaneneſs, and Debauchery of the Times, take no care of removing away the Cauſes, and Occaſions of them. For I do not doubt but that very much of the Impiety, Irreligion, Separation and Diviſion, which do abound among us, is in a great degree imputable to the Ignorance and Wickedneſs of Clergy-men. Were Clergy-men perſons of Wiſdom, Learning and Gravity, and of unblemiſhed Converſation, that had nothing to do with any of the unfruitful Works of Darkneſs themſelves, they would ſhame and rebuke the Licentiouſneſs of the Age, and more eaſily draw people from the Private Aſſemblies to the more Publick Worſhip of God.

11. If the Governours of the Church ſhall think fit to Commend a Chriſtian Inſtitution, or Form of Doctrine to the Clergy, for the Direction of their Sermons, and Publick Diſcourſes, I know no hurt in it, it may have its Advantages and Utilities,

Utilities; but the *Impoſing* ſuch a thing is to me an Averſion. I know not what to compare it to better, than a Rack, where mens Joynts & Limbs are retched and extended to their very great torment and vexation. To Impoſe a large Confeſſion, containing many and uncertain Propoſitions, and ſuch as have exerciſed the Wits of Learned men for many Ages, and are like to do ſo to the Worlds end, is to ſet mens Minds upon the Tenters, and to exerciſe an inſupportable Tyranny over their Judgments and Conſciences, to the breaking of the Peace of Chriſtians, and the Ruine of multitudes of good, and pious, and holy men, and this to the great detriment of Religion, and the Souls of men, and the Joy of the Devil and his Angels. And I do proteſt, I cannot but wonder, by what fate even ſome good and excellent men are engaged in favour of Impoſitions; Is it not as evident as that the Sun ſhines at Noon, that they have Rent, and Torn, and Divided the Churches of God in all Ages for theſe 1300 years, and have engaged them in thoſe Heats and Animoſities againſt each other, that by mutual Cenſures and Excommunications they cenſure the whole Univerſe of Chriſtians unto Hell? I doubt not but that God will be more kind to them all, then they are to each other, or elſe I know not what will become of them, and where their Portion muſt fall. But this is one of the happy Effects of Impoſitions, which I can hardly mention without Indignation, and yet ſome

good men ſeem to be mightily in Love with it, and hug and embrace it as an excellent Inſtrument of Union and Peace. *Je demande que nous diſtinguions ſoigneuſement entre les Doctrines ſi clairement eſtabilies en la parole de Dieu, que tous les Chreſtiennes ſont obliges de les recevoir; & celles qui ont beſoin, pour leur eclairciſſement, du travail & de la Meditation des hommes pour les eclaircir; que nous n'en admettions point d'autres que les premiers pour fondamentales & invariables; & que quant aux autres nous puiſſions nous diſpenſer de les recevoir ſans prejudice du ſalut, qui ne doit dependre que des premiers. Je pretends que tout cela ſe faſſe ſans rompre la paix & l'union que nous devons entretenir avec ceux qui ont des ſentiments different.* I deſire that we do carefully diſtinguiſh betwixt thoſe Doctrines that are ſo clearly eſtabliſhed in the Word of God, that all Chriſtians are obliged to receive them; and thoſe that have need of the Thoughts and Induſtry of men for the Elucidation of them; and that we admit no other than the firſt as fundamental and invariable; and that we may diſpence with our ſelves in receiving the others without hazard of our Salvation, which doth not depend but on the former: And I do affirm, that this may be done without breach of that Peace and Union which we ought to maintain with thoſe that in theſe ſecond ſort of things are of different Opinions. See that excellent Book *La reunion du Chriſtianiſme*, p. 159, 160. and all over.

12. Many

12. Many things may be forbidden by our Governours to the Clergy, which they ought not to oblige them to abjure or renounce. Suppoſe a Clergy-man ſhould have entertained an Opinion that Ordination by Presbyters is lawful and valid, and that a Particular or Parochial Church is endowed with all Power, that Chriſt Jeſus hath given to his Church: Peradventure our Governours may without any hurt or injury to him, or any other elſe, forbid him the publiſhing of theſe Opinions, or making Proſelites to them; but why he ſhould be obliged to renounce them, I do not underſtand. He may be a good man, and capable of ſerving God in the Goſpel of his Son, though he ſhould be of that perſuaſion in thoſe things; and though he cannot renounce them, he may be very willing to ſilence, and keep ſecret his Sentiments, in obedience to his Superiors, and for the ſake of Peace. Again, to the like purpoſe Submiſſion to many things may be more ſafely required, than approbation; and there are multitudes of pious and peaceable men, that could endure and bear with many things that they can never approve. Many men peradventure might endure the uſe of the Croſs in Baptiſm, and the denial of the Sacrament to ſuch as refuſe to take it kneeling, and the ſinging of Prayers in an unintelligible tone, and many other things which they would never like nor approve. And indeed ſuch is the World, and ſuch is the Church, that many things muſt be endured, which cannot,

nor ought not to be approved, for neither the one, nor the other, will ever be ſo good as they ſhould be. And here do I like well that good tempered Rule of St. *Auſtin*, and which indeed is alwaies reaſonable, *Adhibendus eſt modus temporaque ſervanda, nec in confirmatione virtutis negligenda eſt diſciplinæ ſeveritas, nec immoderatione coercionis diruzpendum vinculum ſocietatis.* Cont. Ep. Parm. l. 2. c. 6.

13. If Silence and Submiſſion had been required, where Abjuration and Approbation hath been Impoſed, the Chriſtian World had known more Peace, and Religion had flouriſhed, and been much more ſucceſsful, than it hath been for many hundred years. Silence and Submiſſion would have obtained all thoſe ends, which have been ſought for in vain, by peremptory and rigorous Impoſitions. But when ſome men are not ſatisfied that others do quietly bear and ſubmit to their Pride, their Domination and imperious Folly, but they muſt alſo approve it, juſtifie it, & commend it. This is ſo monſtrous a piece of Tyranny, that I know not to whom originally to impute it, unleſs to the Devil, who requires the ſame of his Servants; but thoſe that are the Freemen of Chriſt, can never endure it. Nay, I will add this little on the contrary hand, That had ſome things been condemned only to *Silence*, inſtead of *Renunciation*, and others been required only as to *Submiſſion*, inſtead of *Approbation*, I do believe we ſhould have never ſeen thoſe Diviſions, nor known

thoſe

thoſe Perſecutions, nor heard thoſe Outcries and Complaints of Schiſm and Separation, nor been in this danger of being ſwallowed up by the Papiſts, as now we are. But there are ſome Clergymen in this, and ſome in another World, that were of another mind, though it is like they have by this changed their Opinion, at leaſt ſome of them, and others will do it in due time. *Deciſiones Diviſiones pariunt, & quo plures fuerint deciſiones, eo plures inde oriuntur Dviſiones & Schiſmata.* Curcellæus ubi ſupra.

14. If Hereticks in Fundamentals, and Perſons of pernicious and dangerous Opinions, creep into the Church, let them after due Admonition, by their Superiours and Collegues, be rejected. This is the Method that the Apoſtle preſcribes, and I know not where to find a better. Impoſitions to obviate Hereticks, have kept many ſober and uſeful men out of the Church, but in my apprehenſion very few Hereticks. They are uſually men of a lubricous and ſlippery ingeny, and 'tis a very hard matter to ſet any traps or gins, which they will not eſcape, or to make any nooſes, out of which they will not ſlip their necks; and I am abundantly convinced, that where *One* Heretick, or dangerouſly Erroneous perſon, *Many* excellently Learned and Pious Perſons that might have been very uſeful Inſtruments in the Church of God, have been excluded by this means. There is care ought to be taken to prevent Ignorant and Scandalous Perſons, from entring into the Church

or

or Miniſtry; yet that hinders not but that ſome ſuch Varlets do intrude into it. I think now that the ſame Methods of proceeding, which are uſed againſt wicked and immoral men, are to be uſed againſt men of unſound and dangerous Opinions. The Governours of our Church do not think fit to Impoſe Laws and Rules of ſevereſt Temperance, Sobriety, Juſtice upon all ſuch as are admitted into the Sacred Office, and I know no reaſon why they ſhould preſcribe ſtricter Rules to their Judgments than they do to their Lives; and that as a wicked Converſation becomes penal and liable to cenſure, when it diſcovers it ſelf; ſo 'tis time enough to puniſh Erroneous Perſons when their Errours do appear; for theſe entangling Impoſitions (which are a ſort or kind of preventing Medicines,) do, as I muſt ſay ſtill, rather choak honeſt men, than bar the Hereticks, or perſons of dangerous and miſchievous Judgments. *No particular Church ought with rigour to require Subſcriptions to Articles that are evidently true and neceſſary to be profeſſed; becauſe in the Diviſion of hearts that is in the World, it is certain that ſome good men may diſſent, and then either they ſhall be afflicted, or tempted to Hypocriſie: Of either of which if Eccleſiaſtical Laws be guilty, they are not for Edification; they are neither juſt, nor pious, and therefore oblige not.* Biſhop Taylor, Duc. dubitantium, lib. 3. pag. 358.

15. If the Biſhops of the Church did vigilantly inſpect both the Lives and Doctrine of the Clergy,

Clergy, I do not ſee any great danger conſequent to the Intruſion of ſome ill, and Erroneous Perſons into the Sacred Function; for as ſoon as their Prophaneneſs and Errours are manifeſt, they are liable to Admonition and Cenſure, and if they remain obſtinate and incorrigible, they may be ſuſpended, and removed from the Miniſterial Office. This I do confeſs requires great Care and Intendance over the Inferiour Clergy, which yet I think no more than is the duty of thoſe that are the Overſeers of God's Houſe, and do or ſhould watch for Souls. But alas! that the honour which attends the Epiſcopal Office, ſhould be one thing, and the Labour that is annexed unto it another; that the former ſhould be loved ſo much by ſome men in the World, who have no extraordinary kindneſs, if any at all, for the latter. Perſonally to inſpect and ſuperintend the Doctrine and Manners of the Clergy is a drudgery that theſe cannot bear, and muſt be done therefore by Commiſſaries and Officials, and Arch-Deacons, who think nothing penal, or worthy of rebuke in them, unleſs it be ſome defection in Conformity, nor nothing worthy of praiſe, unleſs it be the virtue of Canonical Obedience.

16. Perſonal Inſpection into the Lives and Doctrines of the Inferiour Clergy, is indeed a thing unpracticable in the Church of *England*, whilſt Dioceſſes are of the preſent Latitude and Extenſions. Is a Biſhop like to overſee the *Life*, and take knowledge of the *Doctrine* of ſuch Preſbyters

byters as he never ſees, nor knows no more of than he doth of ſuch as Live under the Empire of the Grand Seignior, or the great Duke of *Moſcovy*? To do theſe things by Delegates and Proxies, is to change the Nature of Eccleſiaſtical Government into a worldly and ſecular Method of Rule and Empire, of which I ſee no footſteps in the *primo* Primitive Church, for the firſt two hundred years, but thoſe that were Biſhops, did the work of Biſhops; and Delegation of Epiſcopal Power and Duty without the Office, I find none, nor I believe never ſhall, though Biſhops of After-Ages I do acknowledge, did find a way of devolving the moſt troubleſome and laborious part of their Office to others, they themſelves re-retaining what was moſt eaſie and honourable, and it is well if they could have gone to Heaven too by the Labour and Duties of their Proxies. *Qui Epiſcopatum deſiderat, opus bonum deſiderat, opus, non honorem*, ſaies *Hierom* on *Tit. c.* 1. Τότε ἡ ἐπιστασία ἦν οὐ τιμὴ ἀλλὰ πρόνοια τῶν ἀρχομένων. Τοῦτο οὐδὲ τοὺς αἱρομένους ἐποίει ἐπαίρεσθαι (ἐπὶ γὰρ κίνδυνος ἐκαλοῦντο) οὐδὲ τοὺς μὴ αἱρεθέντας ὡς ἀτιμασθέντας ἀλγεῖν. Ἀλλ' οὐχὶ νῦν οὕτως γίνεται, ἀλλ' ἅπαν τοὐναντίον. *Then Prefecture was not Honour, but Care of the Governed. This did not make thoſe that were choſen to it, to lift up themſelves (for they were called to danger:) nor thoſe that were not choſen, to be troubled as neglected. But the matter is not ſo now, but quite contrary.* Chryſoſt. in Act. c. 1.

17. Since the neceſſary Superintendance of the

the Lives and Doctrines of the Inferiour Miniſters and People can never be reconciled with the preſent Extent of Dioceſes, it were to be wiſhed in the next place, that Biſhops and Suffragans were multiplied and encreaſed to that number, as they might be capable of performing all the Duties of the Epiſcopal Office, and this I think might be done if our Superiours pleaſed, without altering the preſent Conſtitution, or diminiſhing the Revenues or juſt Honour of the preſent Biſhops and Epiſcopal Sees. For Example hereunto, St. *Auguſtin* is noted, who ſent a Biſhop to *Fuſſala*, only becauſe it was at too great a diſtance for his Care. I think you may find it in his 260 Epiſtle. *Caveant ergo Doctores & Epiſcopi*, ſaies St. *Jerom* on *Matth. c.* 5. Let the Biſhops take heed, who though they find *Vicarios in Officiis*, ſhall find none *in Tormentis* (according to *Chryſoſtom*, and him) if they neglect their Charge. This multiplication of *Overſeers* would advance very much the Reputation of the Prieſthood; for if they were diligently watched, it would preſerve and encreaſe *Knowledge* and *Sobriety* among them, which are the things that muſt give them a Reputation. 'Tis not a diſtinctive habit, nor Titles of Honour, nor the Countenance of Authority and Laws, that will procure them an Eſteem and Veneration, but 'tis great Knowledge and Soundneſs of Judgment, great Piety, Mortification, Self-denial, Contempt of the World, Love to God and Men, Compaſſion towards Souls, and Zeal

for

for the Salvation of Sinners, that muſt make them loved and eſteemed in the World. And theſe things would be mightily promoted, aſſiſted, and encouraged by the Superintendence, and Perſonal Inſpection, Care and Example of Good and Excellent Biſhops.

18. As the Perſonal Inſpection of Biſhops would advance the Reputation of the Clergy, by promoting Knowledge, Wiſdom, and Sobriety among them; ſo the Wiſdom, Good Converſation, and Eſteem of the Clergy, would mightily advance and encreaſe Piety, Virtue and Godlineſs among the Laity. There's nothing that I know of, unleſs it be the Influence and Aſſiſtances of the Divine Grace, that contributes more to the making of men good, than the Wiſdom and Piety of thoſe that Preach the Goſpel. For although in all places there are ſome, yea many, that are incurably wicked, and ſo perverſe, and crooked, that nothing will make them ſtraight; yet there are more Good and Pious men to be found, where the Goſpel hath been preached, by Wiſe and Pious Preachers, than in any other places whatſoever. The Ignorant and Impious ſeldom or never convert Souls (at leaſt in my Obſervation.) *Animum non faciunt, qui non habent*, Like begets its Like. Thoſe that are themſelves ſtrangers to Godlineſs and Virtues are not likely to make others ſo. I do not abſolutely deny that a wicked man may be an Inſtrument of another man's Converſion and Reformation; but I do believe

believe 'tis very seldom, and of rare experience, Οὐχ ὁμοίως θεωρεῖ τὸ πρόβατον, ὁ μάγειρος καὶ ὁ ποιμήν. *Clem. Alex. Strom. l.* 1. *p.* 277.

19. Let nothing be inserted in the Publick Lyturgy of the Church, but what is agreeable to the Doctrines contained in the three Summaries of Christianity, formerly mentioned. If things of dark and uncertain nature be mingled in our Publick Offices and Prayers, they will occasion the same Divisions, and Separations, the same Factions and Schisms, as if they had been put into the Publick Test and Symbol of Communion; and those persons that come into the Church at one door, will be shut out at the other, and what is given to them with the right hand, will be taken away with the left. Let the matter of of Publick and Common-Prayers, be plain and indisputable; let them contain nothing that can reasonably be scrupled; let the Confessions, Supplications, and Thanksgivings that do compound them, be such as all Good Men may consent unto, and readily and heartily say *Amen*. I must adde; Let them be expressed in the Language and Words of Scripture, this will make them the more grateful and savoury to Pious and Devout Minds; this will render them the more unexceptionable to all men; and certainly no words can be more proper to express our Requests and Desires to God withal, than those that have the Holy Ghost for their Author. A Proposal of this nature was made to some Bishops suddenly upon His

His Majeſties Reſtauration, but 'twas rejected. A Lyturgy ſo formed and expreſſed, would not ſerve their Ends, nor promote their Purpoſes ſo effectually, as that which had been formerly eſtabliſhed and in uſe, and therefore in defiance to all Peace and Union, *That* muſt be Re-eſtabliſhed. 'Tis true, there are not many things exceptionable therein, but ſomething had been long objected againſt ſome paſſages in it, and the whole had been ſeveral years diſuſed in almoſt all Congregations; and if from thence occaſion had been taken, to new Caſt and Mould it, I do humbly conceive it might have promoted more Love and Union, more Charity and Peace, than the Impoſing it, as we have done with almoſt no Alterations. I remember a paſſage in *Cyprian, De Oratione Dominica, When Chriſt hath told us* (ſayes he) *that whatſoever we ask the Father in his Name, he will give it us. Quanto efficacius impetramus quod petimus in Chriſti nomine ſi petamus ipſius Oratione. Agnoſcet Pater Filii verba, &c.* If this be true, that our Petitions are more efficacious for being put in the words of Chriſt's Prayer, I am more perſuaded that our Confeſſions and Lyturgy, if they were formed only in Scripture-Language would be ſafer from exception.

20. I would alſo wiſh further, that ſome Liberty were indulged to ſuch perſons, (being otherwiſe of ſound Judgments, and Loyal and peaceable Principles, as are not ſatisfied in their minds

minds, concerning the Lawfulneſs of a Form of Prayer. I do confeſs that I never read or heard any thing ſaid or written againſt Forms of Prayer, that would convince me of the unlawfulneſs of them; nevertheleſs, becauſe there are many Learned, Pious, and Good Men, of other thoughts and apprehenſions, I do heartily wiſh that they might be permitted the Liberty of their Judgments and Conſciences in that Caſe; nor am I able to ſee any danger, miſchief, or inconvenience conſequent thereunto. There were greater Differences and Varieties among the Antient Churches (without any breach of Love or Charity) than the uſe of a Form or Extemporate Conceptions do amount unto; and ſo it might be ſtill, if Chriſtians, both Clergy and Laity, were as meek, humble, and peaceable as then they were, and as great Enemies to Pride, Empire, and Domination, as then they ſeemed to be.

What is ſaid by *Socrates* and *Sozomen* concerning the different Practices of differing Churches, is often mentioned, and ſufficiently known by Learned Men. 'Tis plain from them, that though they differed much in ſome Rites and Cuſtoms, yet they did not ſeparate from each other, and treat and repute each other as Schiſmaticks. They reputed it, and very juſtly, ſaith *Sozomen*, a fooliſh thing, to ſeparate from each other for the ſake of ſome differing Cuſtoms, whilſt they *agreed in the capital Points of Religion*, περὶ τὰ κεφάλαια

καίρια τῆς θρησκείας συμφωνοῦντες, *lib. 7. cap. 19.* Amongst many Diversities reckoned by *Socrates*, he mentions the great Diversity of their Prayers, and these are his words, πανταχοῦ καὶ παρὰ πάσαις θρησκείαις, τῶν εὐχῶν οὐκ ἔστιν εὑρεῖν συμφωνοῦσας ἀλλήλαις δύο ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό. *Universally among all Sects, you will hardly find two Churches that do altogether agree among themselves in the Manner of their Prayers. In ritu precandi, Valesius* interprets it. *Socrat. lib. 5. cap. 22.*

If any shall say, that *Socrates* speaks here of Sects, and not of the Catholick Church; I answer, 'tis true, he speaks of the *Novatians* some few lines before, and of the *Macedonians* some few lines after; but 'tis certain that the most of the Varieties that he takes notice of in that Chapter, were found among the *Catholicks*; and I see no reason that we should understand the word θρησκείαις which after *Valesius* I have translated *Sects*, in so narrow a sense as may respect only the *Novatians*, and some other Separatists and Hereticks; *it* seems more agreeable to the Historian, to understand the word in a sense so large and comprehensive, as may reach the Catholicks as well as those that were separated and divided from them. But supposing this doubtful, he affirms (in this same Chapter) that those *that were of the same Faith* (by which he means the Orthodox in opposition to Separatists and Hereticks) *differed among themselves in Rites and Customs*, οἱ τῆς αὐτῆς πίστεως ὄντες, διαφωνοῦσι περὶ τὰ ἔθη πρὸς ἑαυτοῦς,

of

of which he gives many Inſtances in the Church at *Rome*, *Alexandria*, *Egypt*, *Theſſaly*, and *Antioch*. They agreed in the ſame Faith, but in Rites and Cuſtoms there were great varieties among them, ſayes that Hiſtorian.

Nor am I ignorant that ſome men think, and report *Socrates* a *Novatian*, and that what he ſpeaks of this great variety of Cuſtoms and Practices in Churches, is in favour to himſelf, and others of that Perſuaſion; Perſons that ſeparate from the Church, being willing to take notice of every little variety that may be obſerved in particular Churches, to countenance their own Departure from them, to prove themſelves True Churches notwithſtanding their Separation. If the matter of this Objection be granted, I know not what prejudice it is to the Allegations produced from him; for though he were a *Novatian*, I hope he might ſpeak Truth, and that the Credit of his Hiſtory is not blaſted by that ſuppoſition; nor could he be ſo utterly bereft of all Senſe, as to report ſuch things, wherein 'twere eaſie to confute him, if they had been falſe. Would he have affirmed ſuch a Diverſity of Cuſtoms, if there had been a preſent Concord in Chriſtian Churches concerning them? And would he have inſcribed his Hiſtory to *Theodorus*, whom he calls a holy Man of God (and therefore a Biſhop, though of what City is uncertain) who could not be ignorant of it, if there had been no ſuch Diverſity? This is to ſuppoſe *Socrates* a Fool, or a Mad

Man, which is an imputation that none but men of that Tribe will charge him withal. But the ſuppoſition of *Socrates* to be a *Novatian*, is in earneſt but an Idle Dream, there being no Evidence for it, that is of any weight or value; and many againſt it, as thoſe that pleaſe may Read in the Life of *Socrates* and *Sozomen* prefixed to this Edition of their Works by *Valeſius*. *So long as Chriſtian Religion was a ſimple Profeſſion of the Articles of Belief, and a hearty proſecution of the Rules of good Life, the ſeverneſs of the Articles, and the clearneſs of the Rule, was the cauſe of the ſeldom prevarication.* Dr. *Taylor* in his Liberty of Prophecying.

SECT. XI.

BEfore I proceed to the remaining Propoſals, I muſt take leave by the way to ſpeak with an Objection or two of ſome folks, who are like to be troubleſome. That *Conceived Prayers* in Publick Aſſemblies, are unlawful, I never yet ſaw proved, and I believe never ſhall. Neither do I think it any ſuch Novelty as ſome men imagine. There are ſeveral Paſſages in the Fathers that make it ſeem very probable, that they made uſe of *Extemporate* Conceptions. I will mention a few of them. *Illuc ſuſpicientes Chriſtiani manibus expanſis, quia innocuis, capite nudo, quia non erubeſcimus, denique ſine monitore, quia de pectore oramus, precantes ſumus omnes.* *Tertullian* in *Apologetico*, *cap.* 30. What *Tertullian* means by *praying*

praying without a Monitor, or Teacher, and by praying *out of the heart*, unleſs it be by a habit, by preſent Conceptions I underſtand not. Nor do I know how he that prays by a *Form* can be ſaid to pray *without a Teacher*. We worſhip *with Supplications according to our ability*, κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἡμῖν ἱκετείας, the One God, *&c. Origen contra Celſum, l.* 8. And in the ſame Book, κατὰ τὴν παρεῦσαν καὶ δοθεῖσαν δύναμιν, *according to preſent given in Ability*, which latter words expound the former, κατὰ δυνατὸν ἡμῖν, and makes it appear that their Prayers were Extemporate. To this ſame ſenſe ſome underſtand thoſe words of *Juſtin Martyr. The Preſident as his Ability ſerves*, ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ, *ſends up Prayers and Thankſgivings, the People joyfully ſaying Amen.* Apol. 2. cap. 39.

But 'tis objected, that thoſe that uſe that way of Praying, do many times ſpeak Nonſenſe, and blaſpheme in their Addreſſes and Supplications to God Almighty, to which I have theſe few things to ſay, 1. I believe thoſe that make this report of mens Extemporate Conceptions, do not ſpeak upon their own knowledge, (they having little or no Communion with ſuch, as make uſe of them) and thoſe that are their Informers, peradventure may be none of the moſt upright, juſt and impartial men, but may put an ill ſenſe upon words that are very innocent, and of ſound and ſafe ſignification. 2. Let this Objection be acknowledged true, what can reaſonably be inferred from it?

Is it unlawful to be uſed, becauſe ſome men have not skill enough to perform it? Will not the ſame Argument hold againſt Preaching? And may it not with as much reaſon be ſaid, ſome men Preach Nonſenſe, Falſe Doctrine, Slanders; others Preach fooliſhly, and pedantickly, not to the Edification, but to the Amazement of their Congregations, and therefore Preaching is unlawful. If this Method of Argumentation be good in one caſe, 'tis good in both; but I am of Opinion, 'tis good in neither; and that the better way of Arguing from thoſe miſcarriages is thus. Some men are neither able to Pray extemporately in a decorous manner, nor to Preach ſoundly, and to the Edification of their hearers, therefore they muſt let it alone, till they be better inſtructed in the one and in the other: Or in Prayer, let them uſe a Form (which I do not doubt is lawful) and in their Sermons let them take aſſiſtance from Books, whoſe Authors were better skill'd in the Art of Preaching than themſelves; but in the mean time let them not condemn thoſe, that need not theſe Helps and Aſſiſtances, but can Pray and Preach in comely, grave, and profitable manner, out of the abundance of their own hearts.

Another Objection as wiſe as the former, is this: In Extemporate Prayers men ſet their hands to a blank, and ſay *Amen* to they know not what; they give the ſame blind Aſſent to the Prayers of every Prieſt, or Extemporizer, that the Papiſts do

do in things doctrinal to the Authority of the Church. This very ſilly Objection hath been inſiſted on, & urged, againſt Extemporate Prayers, by ſome very great men: To which I reply. 1. If men ſaid *Amen* to Petitions before they heard them, or before He that Prayes had expreſſed himſelf in words concerning them, there might be ſomething of ſenſe and truth in it; but Aſſenting to Petitions before they are made, and uttered, is a thing that I underſtand not, nor thoſe, I believe, that have Communion in thoſe kind of Prayers; and if Perſons do not give their Aſſent till the Petition be formed, or expreſſed by words, I hope they may deny their Aſſent, if they judge the matter of it unlawful. 2. According to this Doctrine, no man can joyn with another in Prayer ſafely, unleſs he know aforehand what is the Matter and Contents of it; and thus we muſt have Forms of Prayer for all occaſions and emergencies (if it were poſſible to hit of them) as well as for ordinary Caſes, or elſe perſons may ſet their hands to a blank, and ſay *Amen* to they know not what. We muſt have an Univerſal Form of Bleſſing before Meat, and of Thankſgiving after it, or Form of Prayer for all Maſters of Families, Tutors, *&c.* which muſt be alwaies uſed, and no other Form; a Notion that ſome of thoſe that are in *Bedlam* may poſſibly believe, but it would be ſtrange that any that are out of that place ſhould believe it, unleſs ſome few that ought to be ſent thither. 3. The expe-

rience of multitudes of good and pious People, doth confute this Objection every day. They are ſure they do joyn heartily in Extemporate Prayers, and that they do not ſet their hands to a blank, or ſay *Amen* to they know not what. They know that they Aſſent not to Petitions before they be expreſſed, and that they do Diſſent where they do not approve them, though 'tis very ſeldom that they have occaſion for it; For who are thoſe perſons that expreſs themſelves in words ſinful, blaſphemous, and without ſenſe, they do not know. But enough of this; and peradventure ſome may think I have ſaid too much, to take notice only of ſuch a brainleſs Objection.

This is ſufficient to my purpoſe, that Diſſent from a Publick Lyturgy, and the Uſe of Conceived Prayers, are no Reaſons for making Churches or Perſons Schiſmatical. If any things of this nature are enough to denominate ſingle Perſons or Societies of Men Schiſmatical, 'tis in the Power of thoſe that are uppermoſt to make whom they pleaſe Schiſmaticks. Perſons and Churches may walk in all the Statutes and Commandments of the Lord blameleſs, and yet be cut off from the Church of God as Schiſmatical and conſequently be excluded Life Eternal; for 'tis affirmed of late, that whoever is cut off from a particular True Church, is cut off from the Church Univerſal, out of which there is no Salvation; and ſo, for ought that I can ſee, a Man, or a Society of Men may be very good Chriſtians,

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and yet ſhut out of the Kingdom of Heaven. Which I ſhall be very ready to believe when I can think the Surface of the *Moon* to be no broader than a Sieve, or the Body of the *Sun* no bigger than the Globe that *Atlas* bears upon his ſhoulders in *Cornhill*. *Ce ſeroit un grand bien que les fideles fuſſent ſi parfait, ment d'accord qu'il n'y euſt ent'reux qu'un ſeul ſentiment ſur toutes les choſes de la religion: Mais ve bon heur eſtant pluſteſt a ſoubaitter, qu' a eſperer pour l'infirmité de noſtre intelligence tamdis que nous voyageons en la terre, l'Apoſtre nous ordonne de nous retiner & moderer, en telle ſorti qu'il ſi rencoutre de la diverſité dans noſtre concord.* Daillé *ubi ſupra.*

SECT 12.

TO proceed therefore to three or four things more I have to propoſe, and are yet behind. The one of them, that is, the One and twentieth, is, Let not theſe Tolerated Churches be accounted Schiſmaticks, but let them have the ſame Eſtimation that the Churches of the Jewiſh Communion had from thoſe that were of the Gentile Communion, ſome Diverſity in Rites and Ceremonies there was between theſe Churches then, but they did not repute each other as Schiſmaticks; they accounted each other True Churches notwithſtanding that Diverſity of Opinion and Practices that were among them, and ſo for ought I can ſee, might we alſo. Is it reaſonable or juſt

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to deny thoſe to be true Men, that do differ in the Manner of their Dreſs, and in the Colour or Faſhion of their Garments? Or can it be affirmed with Truth, that the *Indians* in *America* are not of the ſame Humane Race with us, becauſe they go almoſt naked, and we cover, and dreſs, and adorn our ſelves with all the fine things that Nature and Art can furniſh us withal? In ſome parts of *Perſia* (as *Herbert* reports in his Travels) they expoſe their Dead, in others they burn them, and we bury them. The *Eſſedons* among the *Scythians* mince their Dead Friends with the Fleſh of Beaſts, and eat them. *Morendo il padre ad alcuno, tutti i ſuoi parenti portano ivi piu pecore, & amazzetele & fattele in pezzi, minuzzano ancho il morte padre de colui, che gli ha invitate, e meſcolate tutte le carni inſieme, mongiano di compagnia, e ſcorticata e nettata la teſta del morto la indorano e ſe ne ſerveno per un ſimulacro al quale agni anno fanno maggiori ceremonie, & amazzano maggior vittime,* as the *Italian Giovanni Boemo* has it, in his Book of the *Cuſtoms of Nations.* The differing Manners of People are reconcilable with the ſame Common Nature. And if theſe be true Men, notwithſtanding thoſe things in which they differ from us, ſo may theſe that I have ſpoken of be true Churches, notwithſtanding they may differ in ſome things from thoſe that have the Countenance, Favour and Eſtabliſhment of the Government and the Law.

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Another of them, that is, the Two & twentieth, is, Let it not be thought a Scandal or Reproach for the People of ſeveral Communions, ſometimes to communicate (in ſuch parts of Worſhip as they can) with each other. Why ſhould it be thought an infamous thing for a Church-man to go to a Separate Meeting, and hear their Sermons, and partake with them in their Prayers? Do they not Preach the ſame Doctrine, and offer up the ſame Petitions, (though not in the ſame words) that is Diſcourſed, and are ſent up to the Throne of Grace, in the Publick and Allowed Aſſemblies and Congregations? And why ſhould not the Tolerated and Diſſenting part of Chriſtians come ſometimes and hear the Diſcourſes and Prayers of the Eſtabliſhed Miniſtry? Do they not Preach the ſame Jeſus, the ſame Faith, the ſame Repentance, and the ſame Obedience to the Laws of the Goſpel? Will not many of both Parties Live together hereafter in the ſame Heaven? Will they not behold the Face of the ſame God and his Chriſt? and joyn together in the ſame Prayers and Hallelujahs, in the ſame Quires of Saints and Angels for ever more? And ſhall Chriſtians that will live together for ever in the World to come, live at that Diſtance and Separation in this, that they will not ſo much as own each other, nor communicate in the Service of their common Lord and Maſter? Surely this is not well, there is fault ſomewhere, and I am afraid that neither Party is Innocent. This

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ſtrangeneſs and diſtance is not ſeemingly in Brethren; thoſe that have the ſame God for their Maker, and the ſame Jeſus for their Redeemer, and the ſame holy Spirit for their Sanctifier thoſe that are begotten by the ſame Word, to the ſame Eternal Hope of Glory, ſhould not live like Aliens and Strangers, much leſs like Enemies to each other: They ſhould have a mutual dearneſs and tenderneſs for each other, and communicate together in what they can, notwithſtanding their differences in ſome, yea in many ſmaller things. To advance yet one ſtep more, Let it not be thought a crime, for a Publick Miniſter to Preach in a Separate Aſſembly, nor for a Tolerated Preacher to do the like Office in a Publick Congregation; I know no hurt in ſuch a mutual Enterchange of Love and Duty to and for each other: But I am very much aſſured, much good would be conſequent unto it. It would beget and encreaſe Love and Kindneſs; it would take off thoſe Prejudices, and Falſe Apprehenſions that through Ignorance and Strangeneſs men of different Judgments have entertained of each other. I do not at all doubt, but that there are multitudes of perſons of contrary Judgments in ſome things, that would love each other with great Dearneſs, were they intimately acquainted and known to each other. Yea I will add, that ſuch a friendly correſpondence and entercourſe of Kindneſs, between Conformiſt and Nonconformiſt, would do more to Heal the Breaches, and Unite the

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Judgments and Practices of the Differing Parties, than many Impoſitions, ſharp and ſevere Laws and Executions. Men are to be drawn by Love and Kindneſs, by Charms and Attractives to Union and Conformity, not to be driven to it with Beetles and Sledges, with Swords and Axes.

The Three and twentieth is, In this Enterchange of Love and Duty, let nothing be Preached, but thoſe common Truths in which both Parties are agreed. Let them not be allowed to meddle with thoſe Doctrines which are the Subject and Matter of Controverſie between them. This will not generate Love, or ſerve any good end that I know on, but will enkindle Wrath, and make Animoſities and Feuds, and ſet thoſe that differ at an irreconcilable diſtance from each other. There are things enough in which they agree to furniſh matter for their Diſcourſes of this kind: And to come into each others Congregations, to rail upon each others Perſons and Opinions, is rude and inſufferable. It is very pertinent Advice here of a *Spaniſh* Author. *Eſtu dia de ſuffrir con paciencia quales quier defectos y flaquezas agenas, mirando que tu tienes mucho que te ſufran los otros. Si non puedes hazer a ti qual deſſeas, como quieres tener al otros a tu ſabor? Patiently endeavour to bear the Imperfections and Weakneſſes of others, conſidering that there is much in you that others muſt bear and endure. If you cannot make your ſelves ſuch as you would be, how can you expect that others ſhould be according*

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to your liſt, or as you would have them? Neither are the Preachers of both ſides to rail at, or reproach each other in their own proper and peculiar Churches and Congregations, or in their Printed Books and Pamphlets. If they do think fit to meddle with each others peculiar Opinions, let them do it with calmneſs and meekneſs; let them in fair language, confute one anothers Arguments, without all unneceſſary Reflections, or perſonal Provocations. Reproaches, and Mutual Expoſing of each other to common ſcorn does no good. No man ever becomes a Convert in his Judgment by being railed on, expoſed, or derided. This Method of proceeding enkindles and enrages mens Spirits; it heals no Wounds, nor makes up any Breaches, but makes them greater, and more uncapable of Cure. *No ay ninguno ſin defecto ninguno ſin carga, ninguno es ſufficiente para ſi, ninguno es, complidamente ſabio para ſi, y portanto conviene llevarnos unos a utros. No man is without defect, no man without fault, none is ſufficient for himſelf, and therefore we muſt bear and tolerate each other.* Menos precio *del Mundo.*

What is ſaid in theſe laſt Directions in the behalf and favour of an interchangeable Love, and Offices of Kindneſs, betwixt Approved and Tolerated Miniſters and Churches, is no more than what *Amyraldus* pleads for betwixt the *Lutheran* and *Calviniſts*, and the Churches of thoſe Profeſſions. Having ſpoken of the great diſtance and prejudices of thoſe two Parties againſt each other

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he adds, *Nunc in magnam ſpem venimus fore ut in poſterum tempus omnino melius ſe res habeant. Nam producere quidem in ſuggeſtum Auguſtanum, reformatæ confeſſionis Miniſtrum, qui intemperie aliqua animi, vel Dogma Calvinianum in iis in quibus diſſentimus ad populum ſpargeret, vel in Dogma Lutheranum inveherétur, uti prepoſterum eſſet atque temerarium: ſic etiam in formulæ Concordiæ injuſtum pronunciari debet, quemadmodum Auguſtanæ confeſſionis preconem, apud reformatos vel detonare in Calvinum, vel eas res quas probare non poſſumus, magna vi perſuadere velle, nemo eſt qui non judicet minime ferendum eſſe, quique id non pariter prohibendum arbitretur. Ac Miniſtrum Auguſtanum à Reformato invitari, & item Reformatum ab Auguſtano, ut Communionis teſtandæ cauſâ, Reformatus populum Auguſtanum, Auguſtanus populum Reformatum publicè alloquatur ea lege atque omine ut ſeſe contineant intra ambitum earum rerum, quæ ſunt utriſque Communes, quæque ad ædificationem ſpectare poſſunt*, Reſeſt, quam non modo licitam & utilem, ſed abſolute neceſſariam eſſe putamus. *Vid. Amyral. in Irenico, pag.* 386, 387. Something to the ſame ſenſe he ſpeaks, *p.* 383. *Hoc unum ex concordiæ formulâ utrinque ſtipulari ſat erit, ut neque Reformatus in Eccleſia Auguſtana quidquam turbarum excitet adverſus ejus doctrinam diſputando, neque Auguſtanus in Reformata pariter, ſed ut uterque contentus fidem & cognitionem habere apud ſe (ut loquitur Apoſtolus) ſilentio*

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ſe contineat, ne quid temere deblateret ex quo animorum offenſio vel ſcandalum oriatur.

The Difference between the *Calviniſts* and *Lutherans*, is as great, and in ſome things greater than betwixt the Churches of Publick Eſtabliſhment, and thoſe that I do wiſh might be tolerated among us; and why there might not be the ſame interchanges of Love, Familiarity and Kindneſs betwixt them, as this Learned and Pious Pacificator wiſhes and deſires, yea hopes might be amongſt the *Auguſtans* and *Reformed*, I can ſee no reaſon. What reaſon might be given why a Conformiſt might not hear Dr. *Owen*, Dr. *Bates*, or Mr. *Baxter* at *Pinners-Hall*, or elſwhere? yea or why he might not Preach there himſelf? What reaſon can be given why theſe worthy and excellent men might not be permitted to Preach at *Guild-Hall* Chappel, *Bow*, or other Churches in the City? Is not their Doctrine as ſound, their Miniſterial Qualifications as great, and their Manner of Preaching as likely to do good, at leaſt as ſome of the Conformable Clergy? I am not ignorant what Objections the Intereſt, Paſſions, and Prejudices of men, do make againſt what I have propoſed and diſcourſed, nor ſhall I undertake to anſwer them. Humble, holy, mortified men, that love Peace, and the Souls of men, before their own petty Intereſts and Advantages, can eaſily anſwer them themſelves, and others will not be convinced by any thing that I ſhall reply unto them. There's no confuting the Objections

jections that are made by Pride, Covetouſneſs, Ambition, Love of Empire and Dominion, and other Paſſions of Infernal Race; and I have no preſent Inclination to ſpend any Words upon the Objections of inconfutable Men. It is true, that what I propoſe may ſeem at preſent unpracticable, by reaſon of the Inconſiſtency of ſuch Practiſes with the Eſtabliſhed Laws: But it is not impoſſible, I hope, that His Majeſty (who is the Breath of our Noſtrils) with His *Parliament*, may come to think fit, that ſuch Laws be relaxed for the Uniting and Strengthening the *Proteſtant Intereſt*, againſt the *Roman* and *French* Enemy. And if it ſhould pleaſe *God* to incline the Heart of the *King*, and His *Great Council* ſo to do; then will that which I have ſaid be not only very practicable, but, as I think, very uſeful; that is, to leſſen and abate Differences, reſtore decayed and dying Love, and to bring *Chriſtians* to a greater Uniformity in Judgment and Practice, than any other Means or Endeavors whatſoever. *Redintigrationem amicitiæ neceſſario ſequi debet officiorum ſedula communicatio atq; familiaritas.* Amyrald. ubi ſupra.

The *Laſt Propoſal* I have to offer, that is the *Twenty-Fourth* and chiefeſt, & therefore reſerved to the laſt, is this: Let theſe *Tolerated Churches* be made, and then reputed Parts of the National Church, whereof the *King* is the Head. What other Head to find for it, under that Conſideration, after all that hath of late been ſaid concerning it, I am as yet to ſeek. If the *Biſhops* be made

the Head of the National-Church, by the ſame Reaſon all the Biſhops of the Chriſtian World muſt be the Head of the Univerſal Church; (and indeed, thoſe that affirm the One, affirm the Other) which ſome Men will ſay, is *French Popery*; and I know not how to confute them. If the Arch-Biſhops be the Head of the Church, it will be enquired, whether they claim their Title *Jure Divino*, or *Humano?* If *Jure Divino*, they muſt prove it, which will not eaſily be done: If *Jure Humano*, I hope they will grant the *King* Superior to them, and that they are but His Officers and Delegates; which is the ſame thing that I deſire, and which is agreeable to the Opinion of our Firſt Reformers, as is apparent in Dr. *Burnet*'s *Hiſtory of the Reformation*: For *Cranmer* took a Commiſſion from K. *Edward*, by which he held his Biſhoprick, and exerciſed his Juriſdiction. *Vid. Par.* 2. *pag.* 6. And ſo *Bonner* had done before him, from King *Henry the Eighth*. *Vid. Par.* 1. *l.* 3. *p.* 267. And this is the ſame thing, that hath been lately propoſed by that *Thoughtful* Man, Mr. *Humfrey*, in the End of a Diſcourſe written by Himſelf and Others, and dedicated to the Right Honourable, the Earl of *Halifax*, that great and ſagacious Stateſman. I know ſome Men are *Deaf Adders*, who will not be brought to regard it, let a Man have *Charmed never ſo wiſely*; but Theſe (I take it) are ſuch only, who are Enemies to Peace, and will part with nothing for the ſake of it.

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And why now these *Tolerated Churches* should not be accounted true *Churches*, and Parts of the National-Church, whereof the *King* is the Head, I do not imagine. In my Apprehension, they look very like the Churches we read of in the *New-Testament*, which (no Man doubts) were of *Divine Appointment*. For although I do not know, but that some particular Persons from among the Clergy, fittest for it, (As St. *Paul* chiefly imployed himself in Preaching the *Gospel*, and meddled but little with *Baptism*) may be lawfully and prudently chosen, and employed chiefly in the Government of several Congregations, even as many as they can personally know, and be acquainted withal; and if they be called Bishops, and have a peculiar Consecration, and nothing be done in Ordination, Censures, and Absolutions, but with their Knowledge, Direction, and Approbation, I would have no Controversie with them about it: Yet I do professedly avow, that I can find no such thing in the Scripture, nor in the Practice of the Church for 200 Years. I know 'tis said, That the Apostles were Diocesans, and that they governed all or most of the Christian Churches whil'st they lived; but I see no Proof of it, and there's one Argument against it, which I cannot tell how to answer, and 'tis this. If the Christian Churches, in the Apostles days, had no Governours but themselves, 'tis certain, that for the most part they had none at all, for they never fixed in any place, but having

preached the Goſpel, planted Churches, and ſettled Officers amongſt them, they left them, and went to other Places and Countreys. 'Tis true, they did ſometimes return, and viſit the Churches that they planted; but who Governed them in the intermediate Periods of Time? Or were there no Ordinations, Cenſures, or Abſolutions performed in them, or none but by their Direction and Command? That ſome Acts of Diſcipline were performed by their Direction and Command, I do acknowledge; but that all were ſo, and that none ought to be perſormed without it, I ſee no reaſon to believe.

Touching the Practice of the Church after the Apoſtles, till the end of the Second Century, I muſt ſay, That I can find no Evidence of Dioceſan Epiſcopacy, or of any Churches bigger than ſome ſingle Congregations among us at this day. I think the Churches of *Corinth*, *Epheſus*, *Antioch*, &c. ſingle Congregations, and that they all Communicated at one Altar; and that there are many Congregations in *England* as numerous, and ſome much more numerous than they. Yea, I will add (after all that hath been ſaid of late to the contrary) that I am not convinced, that the Church of *Carthage* in *Cyprian*'s days, which was Two hundred and fifty Years after *Chriſt*, was any bigger than ſome of our Parochial-Congregations. In an Epiſtle to the Clergy of *Carthage*, he tells them, *That from the beginning of his Epiſcopacy, he determined to do nothing by his own private*

private Judgment, nor without their Counſel, and the Conſent of his People. A primordio Epiſcopatus mei ſtatuerim, nihil ſine Conſilio Veſtro, & ſine conſenſu Plebis meæ, privata ſententia gerere. Ep. 6. ex Edit. Goulartii.

What doth St. *Cyprian* mean by *His People*, in theſe words? Doth he mean the whole, or Major Part of a Dioceſs, in the Modern ſenſe of the Word? Did he aſſemble his Dioceſs, and take their Conſent in all things that did concern them? *Credat Judæus Appella.* Many Paſſages of like nature might be produced from this great Saint and Martyr, and are by Learned Men, which I will not repeat.

And for ought that I can perceive, *Dioceſan Epiſcopacy* was unknown in this Nation, for ſeveral hundreds of Years after *Chriſt Jeſus.* The *Culdees* were the great Preachers of the Goſpel, and Promoters of Chriſtianity in *Scotland.* Thoſe *Culdees* were no Biſhops, nor had any Ordination, but ſuch as was performed by the *Monk*, or *Abbot* of the *Monaſtery*, in the Iſland *Hii.* This *Monk* (who was himſelf no *Biſhop*) and his *Preſbyters* gave them their Orders; and from thence came *Aidan* and *Finan* into *England*, and are called *Biſhops*; but had no other Ordination, than that abovementioned. *Wini* was the firſt Canonical Biſhop in *Britain*, as *Bede* reports. *Non erat tunc ullus excepto* Wini *in tota* Britannia *Canonice Ordinatus Epiſcopus.* Lib. 3. cap. 28. Which was near Six hundred Years after *Chriſt.*

The Prefecture and Juriſdiction of *Biſhops* in *England*, ſeems to me of Humane Inſtitution, and derived partly from the Favour of Princes, and partly from the Uſurpation of the *Pope*; and thus gotten, and obtained, they enjoyed and exerciſed it for many Hundreds of Years, even till the days of *Henry the Eighth*; who reaſſuming the Authority that had been granted by former Princes, and uſurped by the *Pope*, obliged them to acknowledg their Juriſdiction, by derivation from Himſelf; and ſubjected them to a *Premunire*, in caſe of refuſal: And of this Opinion thoſe *Biſhops* ſeem to be, that took Commiſſions from K. *Henry the Eighth*, and K. *Edward the Sixth*, for their holding their Biſhopricks, and Exerciſe of their Juriſdiction; as I have ſignified already.

Let our preſent Dioceſans therefore, as ſuch, acknowledg themſelves the *King*'s Officers, and by Deputation from Him, let them exerciſe ſuch Authority, *circa ſacra*, as appertains to *Kings*: Let them enjoy their Honour and Revenues, as a Reward of their Service: Let the Powers granted by *Chriſt* to ſuch *Biſhops*, as I have above conceded lawful, and their *Preſbyters*, be left inviolable: And let our Dioceſans ſuperviſe them in the Exerciſe of them; and ſee that they neither neglect, nor abuſe them: And all our Controverſies about Church-Government, will come to an end. Such Churches as ſhould be thought worthy of Toleration, as well as thoſe that have the Approbation of Authority, would ſubmit to ſuch an Epiſcopacy. When

When it ſhall pleaſe *God* therefore to ſend us a *Parliament*, that are able to diſtinguiſh wiſely betwixt Tolerable and Intolerable Opinions and Perſons; and ſo by Law to permit to the One the Liberty of their Aſſemblies, and to reſtrain the Other; and ſhall then prepare a Bill for Declaring the Conſtitution of the Church, as National; making the *King* to be Head of all the Congregations, which ſhall be Tolerated, as well as of thoſe which are Parochial; and the Dioceſan *Biſhops* to be His Officers or Delegates, for keeping good Order amongſt them all; leaving to the Paſtor of every Pariſh or Congregation that Power, which *Chriſt* hath committed to him for Feeding and Ruling the Flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made Him Overſeer; without confounding this *Internal* Power of His, with the *External* of the Other, derived from the *King*; but preſerving the Rights of both ſo, that the One be not ſwallowed up of the Other (Nor forgetting the *Conceſſion* of a ſort of Epiſcopacy, to perform the ordinary Work of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, in that Multiplication of *Superviſors* over the Parochial-Clergy, which I propoſe alſo in theſe Papers); then ſhall the Grounds be laid for a firm and laſting Concord in the Nation, about the Matter of Religion.

There were two Bills in the *Houſe of Commons*, that ſate laſt at *Weſtminſter*, the One for the *Uniting* thoſe that could come in to the preſent Church Eſtabliſhment, the Other for *Eaſe*

to ſuch as cannot. Theſe Bills had they paſſed, and become Laws, might be a good *Interim* for making up our Breaches, till ſome more effectual means were alſo applied; but when they would ſerve for excellent Scaffolds to ſtand upon, while the Work is in hand, the Fabrick it ſelf ſhould be formed out of ſuch Materials as theſe, which I now offer, and which I find put to the End of that Book I have before mentioned, in the laſt Half Sheet thereof, and called *Materials for Union.*

Should it but pleaſe the *King* then, and a *Parliament* to conſider the *Contents* only of what Mr. *H.* hath there propoſed, and paſs the Senſe of it into a Law, it would unite and heal us; it would make us a Glorious Church indeed; firm and Compacted among our ſelves, and therefore impregnable to the Aſſaults of all our Enemies. Tho there were Differences in Judgment among us, and ſome Difference in Practices, yet there would be little or no Difference in Affections; All would mind and promote the common Peace, and unite in reſiſting the Common Enemy. This would put a Period to the Attempts of *Rome*; for to what purpoſe ſhould the Factors and Emiſſaries of the *Roman Conclave* attempt to ſubvert an Eſtabliſhed Church and Religion, where there is no probability of prevailing? And what likelihood is there to prevail, where all Parties are ſatisfied? The One in the Favour and Encouragement of the Government and Laws:

Laws: the other in their Indulgence, and Protection by them.

SECT. XIII.

ALthough it be plain enough from what I have diſcourſed, that I plead the Cauſe of none but *Tolerable Diſſenters*, and am Advocate for no Perſons or Churches that maintain pernicious Errours, and are impenitent and incorrigible in them: Yet to prevent all Miſunderſtandings, I do again here ſubjoyn, That I plead not the Cauſe of ſuch as ſubvert the *Chriſtian Faith*, in the great Eſſentials of it, which the *Jews*, *Mahometans*, *Socinians*, and all other *Infidels* do. I would not have Men permitted to Preach down *Jeſus Chriſt*, and the *Goſpel*, and to Preach up meer *Theiſme*, or the Religion of the Antique or Modern *Heathens*; nor of ſuch as Preach Immorality and Licentious Prophaneſs. I would not have Men permitted to encourage or juſtify Violence or Rapine, Senſuality or Luſt, Rebellion or Treaſon, or any thing that is plainly Wicked, and condemned by the Light of Nature, as well as the Doctrine of Chriſtianity: And of this kind are many *Popiſh Doctrines*, as is evident to all Men, that have converſed in the Writings of their *Caſuiſts*, and ſuch as have the Conduct of Conſcience among them. Particular Inſtances whereof may be ſeen in the *Myſtery of Jeſuitiſm*, and the *Jeſuits Morals*, by any Man that hath a deſire

deſire to be ſatisfied concerning them: Nor of ſuch whoſe Doctrines are inconſiſtent with Civil Government, and Publick Peace; and ſuch is the Doctrine of the *Romaniſts*. A *Papiſt* (if he be true to the Opinions and Decrees of their own *Popes* and *Councils*) muſt be a Rebel, and a Traytor, whenſoever his *Holineſs* pleaſes to command it. This hath been ſufficiently proved by many Authors, and is obvious enough to ſuch as read their Books: And if there be any other Sect or Sort of People, that maintain ſuch Doctrines, as do diſturb the Peace of Mankind neceſſarily and truly, (and not occaſionally, and by accident, for ſo the Goſpel doth it) I have nothing to ſay on their behalf.

But if the Toleration that I have propoſed, and pleaded for, ſhould be thought a Means of increaſing the Separation from the Publick Congregations; I reply; Let care be taken (as I ſaid) that the Clergy, who officiate in them, be Men of Worth, Ability, and good Converſation; that is, ſuch as preach and live Piouſly, and love the Honour of *God*, and the Souls of Men: And let ſome Diſcipline be reſtored to particular Churches under the Inſpection of the *Biſhops*, and difference be made between the Precious, and the Vile, by the Exerciſe of it; that none be reputed and accounted Chriſtians, and admitted to all the Priviledges of Chriſtians, that know nothing but the Name of Chriſtianity, and live in open Defiance to all the Laws thereof: And

if

if theſe two things were done, there would be no great danger of encreaſing the Separation by Tolerating ſome *Diſſenting Churches*; but on the contrary, I do think that Separate Churches would be drained and emptyed, and in a few Years almoſt quite diſſolved thereby. For in my Obſervation, 'tis the Ignorance and Prophaneſs of Clergy-Men, and the Corruption and Impurity of Churches, that began and doth continue the Diviſions, and Separations, that have been, and ſtill are among us: Let the Cauſe be removed, and taken away, and the Effect will ceaſe.

Nay, ſuppoſe ſome ſingle Perſons, few in number, ſhould leave the publick and Allowed Congregations, on occaſion of this Toleration, and joyn themſelves to ſeparate Aſſemblies; What great hurt is there in it, and why ſhould any Publick Preacher be offended at it? What hurt or wrong is it to my Phyſician, if I leave him, and go to another, if he cannot cure me, or I do not like his Methods and Preſcriptions? Hath he any Reaſon to be offended, if another do that which he cannot do? I know the Miniſter of my own Pariſh does oftentimes meet ſome or other of his Pariſhoners, going to their Conventicles, when he hath been going to Church, and the like in his and their Return; and yet I never heard that he grew into any Paſſion or Diſpleaſure with them about it, much leſs that he proſecuted them at Law for it: But he

he hath been heard to ſay, *That if they learned the Way to Heaven at their Private Meetings (as he hoped they did, at leaſt ſome of them), he did, and would rejoyce:* And why others may not do ſo too, I ſee no reaſon, nor underſtand any thing to the contrary. Muſt Men die, if I cannot cure their Diſeaſes? Muſt they periſh, if my Pills and Potions will not recover them? Muſt Men be damned, if the publick Preacher cannot perſwade them to Faith and Repentance, or teach them the Way to Heaven? Surely, methinks thoſe that know the Worth of Souls, ſhould rejoyce in their Salvation, whoever be the Means of it.

I will add, that Intereſt hath ſo powerful and mighty an Influence upon Mens Judgments, that were nothing but things abſolutely *neceſſary to Salvation* impoſed, and a Form of wholſom words commended to thoſe that are admitted to the Publick Congregations, and Preferments of the Church, I am very much inclined to believe, that in a few Years it would be hard to find Perſons to officiate in ſeparate Congregations: Moſt Men would believe thoſe Doctrines which have publick Approbation, and which make them capable of Livings and Advancements; and others would ſilence their particular Apprehenſions, and make no oppoſition unto them, that they alſo might ſhare in them, and where to find Perſons to miniſter in holy things, at Separate Churches, would peradventure be no eaſie thing. And if at His *Majeſty*'s Reſtauration

ſome

ome few, plain, neceſſary things had been impoſed, and all the reſt only commended and countenanced, I do believe, that where there is now Ten *Diſſenters*, there would not have been above One. 'Tis theſe numerous and unneceſſary impoſitions, that are the Plague of the Chriſtian World, as well as the *Church of England*; and have both made and continued all the Breaches, and Separations, that our Ears have heard, and our Eyes have ſeen. *Qui naturam Religionis præcipue Chriſtianæ, quæ tota Spiritualis eſt bene perfectam habuerit, facile animadvertet vim & coactionem non eſſe idoneum ad eam promovendam medium. Nec enim Equulei aut gladii, aut ignes quibus corpora cruciantur quicquam in animum valeant.* Curcel. in Inſtitut. l. 7. p. 589. *Sed nec Religionis eſt cogere Religionem, quæ ſponte ſuſcipi debeat, non ni; Cum & hoſtiæ ab animo libenti expoſtulentur. Ita & ſi nos compuleritis ad ſacrificandum nihil præſtabitis Diis veſtris, ab invitis enim ſacrificia non deſiderabunt.* Tertul. *in* lib. ad Scapulam. p. 447. At the firſt Converſion of this Land to Chriſtianity by *Auſtin*, it is ſaid, That the King (*Ethelberthus*) *embraced* all that came into him, but he *compelled* none. *Didicerat enim & a Doctoribus Auctoribuſq; ſuæ ſalutis, ſervitium Chriſti voluntarium non coacticium eſſe.* Bede Eccl. Hiſt. Ang. Gen. l. c. 25.

After all that I have ſaid I do confidently avow and affirm, that 'tis but a very imperfect meaſure and degree of Peace, that the Church of God is capable

capable of in this World, and that among variet
of particular Churches, ſome are capable of mor
Union and Peace, than others are; And then to at
tempt greater Peace and Union, than the Churc
Univerſal is capable of, is to endeavour to de
ſtroy it; And that to endeavour the reducing o
one particular Church, to the ſame Peace and U
nion, that may be found in another, is the High
way to ruine it. I here mean chiefly, Forcible en
deavours by Impoſitions, Laws, and Executions
'Tis with the Peace of the Church Univerſal, a
'tis with the Health of the World, 'twill neve
be compleat and perfect; And to attempt to mak
it ſo, were an impracticable piece of Folly, an
would make it more diſeaſed, or deſtroy a grea
Part of it. 'Tis with particular Churches as 'ti
with particular Climates and Countries, in ſom
the Inhabitants are more hayle and ſound, tha
in others, and to eſſay an Equality of Health a
mong them, would be a pernitious and vain a
tempt; and make many more ſickly, and ſen
Thouſands of others to their Beds of Duſt an
Earth.

All particular Churches are not equaly ſoun
and ſtrong, nor capable of equal Peace and Un
on, and to attempt it by violent remedies wi
certainly encreaſe their Diſeaſes, and make the
wounds and breaches greater, and deſtroy man
of the Members of it, if not the whole; and I fe
this is the Caſe of the Church of *England*, whi
I humbly commend to the Conſideration of t

Eccl

Eccleſiaſtical Phyſicians. I doubt we are not capable as yet of ſo much Union and Peace, as may be found in ſome other of the Reformed Churches; What we may be in the next, or in ſome future Ages, if we happen on Skilful Phyſicians, I will not determine, but I hope well.

I have anſwered the grand Cavil, made in favour of Impoſitions, and in prejudice to a brief Creed and Symbol, containing only a few plain neceſſary things, expreſſed in the Language of Scripture, or rather the three Summaries of Religion, contained in the common Creed, Lords Prayer, and Ten Commandments. I have obviated alſo I think the moſt conſiderable Objections that are uſually made by the Patrons of Impoſition. I know what I have ſaid will not pleaſe thoſe kind of Men, and if I had deſigned their Acceptation, I muſt have rayled at Diſſenters, and have repreſented them a Generation of People, not worthy to live upon the face of the Earth. I muſt have laid fewel on thoſe flames, that do already rage ſo furiouſly againſt them. But I have other thoughts of thoſe men, and another deſign in theſe papers, who would bring my Bucket to quench the Fire, that burns againſt them. I would attempt to abate the rage, and allay the heats that are raiſed, and do threaten their ruine. If what I have written may ſerve this end, I ſhall rejoyce; If it may be acceptable to moderate and Pious Men, I ſhall not regard the cenſures of thoſe that rage and rave. *Si non Aurem*

rem ſolum percutit Iracundia Criminantis, verumetiam conſcientiam mordet Veritas Criminis; quid mihi prodeſt ſi me continuis laudibus totus mundus attollat? Ita, nec malam Conſcientiam ſanat Praconium Laudantis; nec bonam vulnerat Convitiantis Opprobrium. Aug. Cont. Lit. Petiliani. l. 3. c. 1.

The Sum of all is this, Peace and Union amongſt Chriſtians, is a thing greatly amiable and deſirable; but ſuch are the imperfections, and Corruptions of humane minds, and of ſuch different ſizes and various Prejudices are mens underſtandings, that 'tis morally impoſſible they ſhould agree in more, than ſome plain things. And therefore numerous and unneceſſary Impoſitions, are no proper terms of Peace, but great inſtruments of Diviſion, and have been been ſo for many Hundreds of Years. And as much peace as the Church of God is capable of, in this imperfect State, may be obtained by other and better means; and the Evils that are pretended to be cured, or prevented by impoſing, may be healed and provided for by more Chriſtian Methods. *Neq; ad plenam charitatis & ſocietatis Chriſtiana concordiam, neceſſaria eſt plena opinionum de Dogmatibus & Ritibus Conſenſio: ſed cum aliqua in hiſce diſſenſione iniri jure poteſt, ac honeſte foveri inter diſſidentes Eccleſiaſtica Pax & fraterna conſociatio.* Forbs. *Inſtruc. Hiſtor. Theol. lib.* 14. c. 7.

Before I go off, I muſt requeſt the Reader, calmly and without heat to conſider the Contents of this Diſcourſe, before he cenſure or condemn

condemn it, and that he will not take ſome ſingle *Sections*, ſeparate and alone, and charge them with Abſurdities (which he may eaſily do) but conſider the Whole, and compare the Parts with each other. For what in one Place is liable to Objection, may in another be freed from it. If any Man ſhall think fit to reply to what I have written, and doth write calmely, and with a peaceful Spirit, I ſhall not promiſe a Rejoynder, but I ſhall conſider what he ſays: But if he rages, and is angry, and gives me hard words, having no cauſe for them, I know how to imploy my time better, than in anſwering ſuch Folly.

And now then, I will ſhut up my Book with ſome words, which were in the Mouths of the *Proteſtants*, at the Firſt Reformation in *Italy*, and may be put in the Mouths of thoſe that *Diſſent* from us now in *England*. *God* knows, how ſoon we may be *made one* to our coſt.

Ne vi Laſciate dare a Credere da i Voſtri Eccleſiaſtici, che quelli che per la Lettione de la Sante Scritture vengono ne la cognoſcenza del Siglivolo di Dio, et de ſue promeſſe, ne le quali Confidati rejettano tutte le Traditione humane, Sciano (come pare hoggi a torto ci chiamanno) Tumultuoſi, Perturbatori de la Pace e Quieta publica, Autori de Seditione, e Pieri d'ogni vitio e Licenza. Impero che Dio non e Autore di Diviſione, ma di Pace. Ne ſiamo noi i primi, i quali ſiamo di cio Stati Salſamente imputati, Concioſcia che a Elia primo fu dello che egli diſturbaa il popolo d' Iſrael. Chriſto Anchora fu chiamato

ſeditioſo dai Judei. Egli Apoſtoli erano accuſati che commoverano it Popolo. Suffer not your ſelves to be prevailed upon by your *Eccleſiaſticks*, to believe, that thoſe who by reading the Scriptures come to the Knowledge of *Chriſt* and his promiſes, and truſting on them, reject all Humane Traditions, are (as at this day, to their *great injury* theyare called) Tumultuous, Diſturbers of publick Peace & Quiet, Authors of Sedition & Licentiouſneſs, for *God* is not the Author of Diviſion, but of Peace: We are not the Firſt, to whom theſe things have been imputed. It was ſaid of *Elias*, *That he was the Troubler of Iſrael.* The Jews ſaid of *Chriſt*, *That he was Seditious and Subverted the People*: And 'twas ſaid of the Apoſtles, *That they did exceedingly trouble their Cities and turned the World upſide down.*

Aprite, Aprite gli occhi voſteri, e conſiderate bene voi che permettete che ne voſteri citta ſtiano Gjudei, et altri non ſolamente di contraria Religione a quella del ſiglivolo di Dio, ma Diſtruttori d' eſſa Anchora et Atheiſti, et non permetterete chi quelli, i quali ſeguitano la Vera Dottrina e Religione de Gieſu Chriſto, ſtiano ne voſtri Citta e Caſe loro, contra ogni Giuſtitia e Legge tanto civile quanto Divina? Open, open your Eyes, and conſider, you that permit Jews in your Cities, and others not only of contrary Religion to that of the Son of *God*, but utter Deſtroyers of it, yea, arrant *Atheiſts*; And will ye not ſuffer thoſe, which follow the true Doctrine and Religion of *Chriſt Jeſus*, to dwell

dwell in your Cities in their own Houſes, contrary to all Right both Humane and Divine?

Theſe are Words in an Addreſs to the *Italian Princes*, and Republicks, in the Year 1562. Unto which I will therefore yet affix a Sentence that is *Freſh*, out of the preſent Biſhop of *Cork*, in his late Book call'd, *The Proteſtant Peacemaker*, who hath rendred himſelf (I take it) Obſervable for his ſeveral Condeſcending paſſages to the *Nonconformiſts*: and more eſpecially, for the mention he makes of one Book of theirs, entituled, *A Peaceable Reſolution of Conſcience touching our preſent Impoſitions* (and it is a *Peaceable* Book indeed) with ſo much Integrity and Honour as he does, though ſcarce taken notice of by others: as alſo, for this one ſaying of his, which is fit (I think) to be ſet on a Beacon, and ſhall be therefore my Concluſion. *I am, and muſt be of the mind, that the ſtrength of the* Proteſtant Cauſe, *both at Home and throughout Chriſtendom, lies in the Union of* Proteſtants; *and the Glory, Purity, and Power of Chriſtianity in this World, ſtands or falls with Proteſtantiſm.*

SECT. *Ult.*

TO this Diſcourſe before going, written by a Learned Hand in the Country, which does here end, the *Bookſeller*, who knows him not, is adviſed to annex the Copy of thoſe two Bills for *Accommodation*, that were in the *Houſe of Commons*, when they Sate laſt at *Weſtminſter*;

to this end, that they may be here as it were upon Record, for the Uſe of the *Parliament*, when any ſhall be called.

It is ſome Months ſince this Book (which ſo much concerns that Argument,) was ſent out of the Country, and it was retarded in the Preſs ſeveral Weeks, in hopes of a *Parliament* coming, that might have made the Subject more ſeaſonable: But now the very Talk of one being lodged for this *Summer*, it is fit ſomething be put to it, as may make it to be of uſe in *October*. The *Bees* and *Ants* have their Inſtinct in the Summer, to make Proviſion for their Lives againſt the Winter.

There are Two ſorts of *Nonconformiſts* we know; The *One* who do allow of a *Liturgy*, and our Parochial Churches, and theſe may be all *Comprehended* upon very reaſonable condeſcenſions: The *Other* who do not allow of either, and theſe muſt be *Indulged*, or deſtroyed. It is two Bills therefore, or theſe two things in one Bill, which are neceſſary to the deſigne of Accomodation.

In that Parliament, the *One* of theſe Bills (for there was *Two* of them, as the *Gentleman* before hath told us) the Bill for *Indulgence*, was carefully attended by ſome concerned in it, and was therefore brought to Perfection: The *Other* Bill that for *Comprehenſion*, was looked after very ſorrily; and if it had Paſſed as it was Drawn up, would have brought in, no Body.

For

For inſtance, The *Declaration of Aſſent and Conſent to the Book of Common-Prayer*, required in the *Act of Uniformity*, was taken away wholly in this Bill, but the *Subſcription* required in the ſame *Act*, was taken away only in the latter part: And when in the former part there are theſe words, *And I will Conform to the Liturgy of the Church of* England, *as it is now by Law Eſtabliſhed*, (which are really equivalent with the *Declaration of Aſſent and Conſent* to the *Uſe* of the *Book*, and it is to no more, than to the *Uſe* of it, the *Declaration* is required to be made, by the *Act*), it follows, that to take away *One* of theſe injunctions and not the *Other*, could be of no Signification. Upon notice hereof therefore given to ſome Members of the Houſe, it was moved at the Committee to take away the whole *Subſcription*, as well as the *Declaration*; and it being carried in the Affirmative, the Bill as it is here preſented, hath that Amendment.

There are ſome few Additions more inſerted as neceſſary thereunto for the obtaining its end, the reaſons whereof appear in their own light, yet is it Judged fit, that publick notice be given of two or three of them.

The *One of them* is the Parentheſis about the Beginning, where the *Thirty-Nine* Articles are impoſed on every Miniſter to Subſcribe, which notwithſtanding the Exception of Three of the Articles, do yet require more Caution. Whoſoever have read a Book, called, *A*

part of a Regiſter, wherein there is a Relation of ſeveral things in reference to the *Nonconformiſts* in Q. *Elizabeths* days, they will find that there was nothing ſo greivous to them and exaſperated them then againſt the Biſhops ſo much as the Subſcriptions of thoſe times, and the Subſcription to the Articles was one among the reſt; which makes me wonder what our good men did now mean, to impoſe the *Subſcription* of theſe Articles ſo rigidly upon all, for the enjoyment of the benefit of either of their Bills, of *Union*, or *Indulgence*. They know not really what it is they were a doing, for if the Perſecuting Spirit ſhould be raiſed hereafter about this Subſcription, and the thing be ſo preſſed that all who Subſcribe not, ſhall be Proſecuted by the Law, there were like to ariſe *greater troubles* to tender Conſciences, and ſcruples more unanſwerable, then could be about the Cap and Tippet, the Surplice and Croſs, in thoſe dayes. The doubtfulneſs of many about the Ceremonies is not to be compared to a Conviction of Conſcience, that a man muſt not Subſcribe to any point which he believes untrue. By this means therefore ſhould theſe Articles of the Church, intended for Peace, become the inſtruments of Torment, and be had in the greateſt Deteſtation, which conſequently will defame, and then ruine the Proteſtant Religion. There will be Perſecution in the Church, that's certain, for the Devil will have it ſo: There will be *Tender*

der Conſciences, that's certain, for *God* will have it ſo. When there are no other things then to trouble Mens Conſciences but this Subſcription, Exceptions and Scruples will be raiſed againſt theſe Articles; and if a Parliament do not prevent them in their Bill by a preſent mitigation, they Act not like wiſe Men, and do not ſee Ten Years before them. The only remedy againſt this evil is to provide a liberty in both the Bills, that every Conſciencious Man that really ſcruples any of the Articles may explain his ſenſe, which if it ſhall not paſs unleſs it be allowed to be Orthodox by the Biſhop (or by two other Biſhops, in caſe the Dioceſan be partial) there can be no harm in it, at leaſt none in compariſon of this miſchief, which is to be prevented hereby.

Another of them is about the Middle, concerning *Orders*. In the late Times, when the Biſhops were down, many were ordained by *Presbyters* and the Houſe was willing to allow thoſe Orders, as good in a *Caſe* of *Neceſſity*, upon which account only the rigid Epiſcopalian will allow of the Miniſtry of the Reformed Churches beyond the Sea: but there being others that have been Ordained ſince the return of the Biſhops, the Houſe made no proviſion for ſuch in the Bill, being not willing (we may ſuppoſe) to countenance a neglect of the Biſhops *out of that caſe*. And what then ſhall ſuch do? There is an Ordination to the *Office*, or *Miniſtry it ſelf*, and he

that is *Once* Ordained to *that*, whether by Presbyters or Biſhops, cannot receive the Spiritual Power (or Character), or be made Miniſters, *Again:* But there is a laying on of hands to the *Work* of that Office in regard to a new Charge, as *Paul* and *Barnabas* who were Miniſters before, and yet are ſeparated to that peculiar Work, (unto which they were called by the *Holy Ghoſt*) by the laying on of the Hands of thoſe who are named *Act.* 13. Such an Ordination now as this may be repeated, and is the only *Medium* for reſolution of this difficulty.

The Third of theſe Inſertions is the laſt whole Clauſe concerning the *Common-Prayer*, the due conſideration whereof is the very main hinge upon which the whole matter of this *Compreheniſion* does turn. If Union it ſelf be neceſſary, it muſt be neceſſary to know what is the Bottom, upon which we can be United. In all Reconcilements between different Parties, the firſt thing that is to be found out, is a Medium for their Agreement. When we have found this, it muſt be conſidered, how far each Party can come up to that Medium, and then we can make the Accommodation. The Medium of Reconciliation in this Buſineſs, at this time, between the *Conformiſt* and *Nonconformiſt*, is the *Common-Prayer*. Some Perſons (as is ſaid before) do hold, that a ſtinted Form of Prayer, and our Pariſh-Churches, are unwarrantable by *God*'s Word; who, though they may be *Indulged*, are thereby

thereby uncapable of *Comprehenſion.* Others are ready to maintain the Lawfulneſs of both theſe; and the Enquiry about ſuch is, How far they can do that which is enjoyned? That is, How far they can Read the *Common-Prayer*, and how far they cannot Conform to it? This is the Critical Point, in regard to this Bill between the *Conformiſt* and *Nonconformiſt*. The *One* can Read *all*, the *Other* ſo *much* only as will ſerve for Union. The *Nonconformiſt* now, who hold a Form of Prayer, and the Pariſh-Churches lawful, are, for the moſt part of them, able (through Providential Mercy) to Conform to the *Ordinary Lord's Day* Service, their Exceptions (which make the *Liturgy* to them unlawful) lying in other Parts or Moments of the Book. And conſequently, if the Bill may be hemmed up with the Clauſe here offered, it will do. Without that Clauſe, it is apparently imperfect: With it, it will be what we may call *Perfect*, that is, *Perfect* in its kind, ſo far as to anſwer its end, and bring in *All* of the *Willing*, and *Many* of the *Unwilling*, that go under the Name of the *Preſbyterian Perſwaſion.* This being premiſed, the Bills (the Titles only as they were in the *Houſe*, being voluntarily omitted) are as followeth.

The

THE
Bill for Comprehenſion.

WHereas *the Peace of the State is highly concern'd in the Peace of the Church, Therefore at all Times, but eſpecially in this Conjuncture, it is moſt Neceſſary to be preſerved. In Order therefore to remove Differences and Diſſatisfactions, which may ariſe among Proteſtants,* Be it enacted *by the* Kings *moſt Excellent Majeſty, by, and with the Advice and Conſent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in this preſent* Parliament *Aſſembled, and by the Authority of the ſame,* That *if any Perſon ſhall (without making any Interpretation of his own, unleſs it be ſuch as ſhall be allowed to be Orthodox by his Dioceſan, or two other Biſhops) Subſcribe, and Declare his Aſſent and Conſent unto, and Approbation of the Articles of Religion, mentioned in the Statute made in the* 13th. *Year of the late* Q. Elizabeth, *except only the* 34th. 35th. *and* 36th. *Articles; and alſo, except theſe words in the* 20th. *Article* [Viz. The Church hath power to decree Rites & Ceremonies, & Authority in Controverſies of Faith,] *in like manner as he is already Obliged to Subſcribe, and Declare his Aſſent and Conſent unto, and Approbation of, all the ſaid*

39 *Ar-*

39 *Articles: Every ſuch Perſon ſhall be as capable of taking any Degree in either Univerſity, or being Ordained Prieſt or Deacon, or of being Collated, Admitted, or put into, and to Hold and Enjoy any Eccleſiaſtical Benefice or Promotion, as if the ſaid Perſon had Subſcribed and Declared his Aſſent and Conſent unto, and Approbation of all the ſaid Articles of Religion.*

And *be it further Enacted by the Authority aforeſaid, That every Perſon Ordained between the Year of our Lord* 1644, *and the Firſt of* May, *in the Year* 1680, *according to the Form of Ordination, uſed by laying on of hands by the Presbytery, ſhall be as capable of any Eccleſiaſtical Benefice, or Promotion, as if he had been Ordained according to the Form of Making and Ordaining Prieſts and Deacons in the Church of* England: *And that every Perſon Ordained only by Presbyters ſince the Year of our Lord* 1660, *ſhall not be admitted to any Benefice, unleſs he receive a ſecond Impoſition of Hands from ſome Biſhop, to recommend him to the Grace of God, for the Work or Exerciſe of his Office, in the Place or Charge unto which he is call'd; and the Biſhop ſhall frame his Words accordingly.*

And Whereas, *by a Statute made in the* 13th. *and* 14th. *Year of His Majeſties Raign that now is, Entituled,* An Act for the Uniformity of the Publick Prayer, and Adminiſtration of Sacraments, & other Rites and Ceremonies, and for Eſtabliſhing the Form of Ordaining & Conſecrating Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons, in the Church of *England*,

there

there are two Declarations impoſed upon ſeveral Perſons, and in ſuch manner as is there ſpecified.

Be it further Enacted *by the Authority aforeſaid, That no Perſon that hereafter ſhall be Preſented, or Collated, or Put into any Eccleſiaſtical Benefice or Promotion, ſhall declare his unfeigned Aſſent and Conſent to the Uſe of all things contained, and Preſcribed in the Book of Common-Prayer; nor Make and Subſcribe the other Declaration, or Acknowledgment,* [*Viz.* I *A. B.* do declare, That it is not Lawful to take up Arms againſt the King, &c.] *according to the Formes in the ſaid Act, in the* 13th. *and* 14th. *Year of His Majeſties Reign, directed and appointed; but that Both the ſaid Declarations ſhall be wholly Omitted, any thing in the aforeſaid Statute to the Contrary Notwithſtanding.*

And *be it further enacted by the Authority aforeſaid, That no Perſon ſhall hereafter be capable of being collated, Admitted, or put into any Eccleſiaſtical Benefice, or Promotion, before ſuch time as the ſaid Perſon ſhall have taken the Oaths of* Supremacy *and* Allegiance *(which Oath of* Allegiance *is contained in the Statute made in the* 3d *Year of King* James*) before the Biſhop of the Dioceſs, (who is hereby Impowred to adminiſter the ſame) and ſhall alſo Make and Subſcribe the Declaration mentioned in an Act of Parliament, made in the* 30th. *Year of His Majeſties Reign that now is, Entituled,* An Act to prevent *Papiſts* from Sittiug in either Houſe of Parliament: *And the Name of every Perſon ſo taking*

king the Oath, and Making and Subſcribing the Declaration aforeſaid, ſhall be Enrolled with the Day and Time of his Taking the ſame, in Rolls to be kept by the reſpective Biſhop of each Dioceſs for that purpoſe.

And *be it further enacted by the Authority aforeſaid, That no Perſon ſhall hereafter be Obliged to take the Oath of Canonical Obedience, or to make the Subſcription required by the Canons, or to go to the Biſhop for a Licenſe to Preach, being already lawfully Ordained, any Statute or Cuſtome to the contrary Notwithſtanding.*

And *be it further enacted by the Authority aforeſaid, That from henceforth, no Perſon whatſoever wear a* Surplice, *during the time of Reading Common Prayer, or Preaching or Performing any Religious Worſhip, in any Church, or Chappel whatſoever, except only in the Chappel of the Kings Majeſty, and all Cathedral Churches of this Realm of* England, *and Dominion of* Wales.

And *be it further enacted by the Authority aforeſaid, That from henceforth, no Miniſter, or other Eccleſiaſtical Perſon, ſhall be Obliged or compelled to uſe the Signe of the* Croſs *in Baptiſm, or any Parent Obliged to have his Child Chriſtened by the Miniſter of the Pariſh, if the ſaid Miniſter will not uſe or omit the Sign of the* Croſs, *according to the Deſire of the Parent, who in that Caſe may procure ſome other Miniſter to do it. Nor ſhall the Child of any Perſon be refuſed Baptiſm, for want of Godfathers and Godmothers, ſo long as the Parent is preſent to fill their place.*

And

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That no Minister, or Ecclesiastical Person, that shall Officiate in the Administration of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, *shall refuse it to any Person that desires to be admitted to the same, although such Person shall not use the Gesture of Kneeling in the Act of Receiving, nor come up to the Communion Table, but shall go to such Convenient Place in the Church, where such Person is, and there give it him in some other decent Gesture of Ordinary use in the Reformed Churches. Nor shall any Minister be troubled for the withholding his own Act, in delivery of the Sacrament from any, whom he Judges notoriously unworthy, or unfit for it: Nor for suspending his reading the Sentence of Excommunication against any of his Parish, until he be satisfied in the Case, that his crime deserves it.*

And to the intent that Uniformity may (so far as it is needful, and so far as it can) be still maintained, Be it enacted Moreover by the Authority aforesaid, That every Parson, Vicar, and Lecturer, shall conform to the Liturgy of the Church, in the Ordinary Lords-day Service, *reading the same by himself, or by his Curate, as by Law it is Established: Reserving a Necessary, and Just Liberty, for his Conscience in any Matter, or Words, which himself esteems unlawful (and so to him it is sin) in the By-Offices, Occasional* Service, *the Rubricks, and otherwise: and also, for Prudence in the whole Mannagement, to Act with respect to Time, Place, and Circumstances, so as appeares most conducive to Edification.*

sion. And ſo long as the main Body of the Service appointed, is there Read, and the Subſtance of the Offices there performed, he ſhall not be Puniſhable for any Breach otherwiſe of the Acts of Uniformity, any thing in the ſaid Statutes to the Contrary notwithſtanding:

THE *Bill for Indulgence.*

FOraſmuch as Some Eaſe to Tender Conſciences in the Exerciſe of Religion, may be an Effectual Means to Unite His Majeſties *Proteſtant* Subjects in Intereſt and Affection, which is highly neceſſary in this time of Eminent Danger from the common Enemy the *Papiſts*: Be it Enacted By the Kings Moſt Excellent Majeſty, by and with the Advice and Conſent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons in this preſent *Parliament* Aſſembled, That neither the Statute made in the 23*d.* Year of the Reign of the Late Queen *Elizabeth*, Entituled *An Act to retain the Queens Majeſties Subjects in their due Obedience*: Nor the Statute made in the Twenty Eighth Year of the ſaid Queen, Entituled *An Act for the more ſpeedy and due Execution of certain Branches of the Statute made in the Twenty Third Year*

Year of the Queens Majesties REIGN, (Videlicet) the aforesaid Act: Nor Statute made in the Third Year of the Reign of the Late King *James*, Entituled *An Act to prevent and avoid dangers which may grow by Popish* Recusants: Nor any other Law or Statute of this Realm, made against *Popish Recusants*, shall be construed to Extend to any Person or Persons Dissenting from the Church of *England*, that shall (being lawfully required) take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy (which Oath of Allegiance is contained in a Statute made in the Third Year of the Late King *James*), and make and Subscribe the Declaration mentioned in a Statute made in the Twentieth Year of His Majesties Reign that now is, Entituled *An Act to prevent Papists from Sitting in either House of Parliament*. And be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That all and every *Person* and *Persons* already Convicted, or *Prosecuted* in Order to Conviction of *Recusancy*, by Indictment, Information, Action of Debt, or otherwise grounded upon the aforesaid Statutes, or any of them that shall take the said Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, and make and Subscribe the aforesaid Declaration, in the Court of *Exchequer* or Assizes, or General or Quarter Sessions, to be held for the Connty where such Person lives, and to be thence respectively certified into the *Exchequer*, shall be thenceforth discharged from all the Penalties, Seizures and Forfeitures incurred by force of any the aforesaid Statutes,

Statutes, without any Compoſition, Fee, or further Charge whatſoever. And be it further Enacted By the Authority aforeſaid, that all and every Perſon and Perſons, (that being lawfully required) ſhall take the ſaid Oaths, and make and ſubſcribe the Declaration aforeſaid, ſhall not be liable to any Pains, Penalties or Forfeitures mentioned in an Act, made the Thirty Fifth Year of the late Queen *Elizabeth*, Entituled, *An Act to retain the Queens Majeſties Subjects in their due Obedience*; Nor in an Act made in the Twenty Second Year of His Majeſty that now is, Entituled, *An Act to prevent and ſuppreſs Seditious Conventicles*; Nor ſhall any of the ſaid Perſons be Proſecuted in any *Eccleſiaſtical* COURT, for or by reaſon of their Non-conforming to the CHURCH of *ENGLAND*.

The Bill proceeds next to a *Proviſo*, That the Doors be not Locked, Barred, or Bolted, where there are Meetings: Then to the Relieving Conſtables, Church-Wardens, and the like Officers, that Scruple the Oaths that belong to thoſe Offices, by admitting a Deputy: Then to the Repealing the *Oxford Act* (or Releaſing the Penalty) to all ſuch as ſhall take the Oaths of *Supremacy* and *Allegiance*, and Subſcribe to the *Declaration* aforeſaid, and the Doctrinal Articles of the *Church of England*, with the exceptions of the former Bill: Upon the ſame Terms, Liberty is granted to any Perſon, to teach a School, or be a Tutor in a Private Family. It *Proceeds* to gi-

ving Eaſe upon the ſame, to *Diſſenting Proteſtants*, who Scruple the Baptizing Infants: Then to the Eaſing other Perſons, who ſcruple Taking all Oaths; whom it ſhall ſuffice to ſay, *That* J. A. B. *Acknowledge, Profeſs, and Teſtify*, inſtead of *J. A. B. Swear That*, &c. According to the Words of the Oaths of *Allegiance*, and *Supremacy*. Then there is an Excellent *Proviſo*, That no Perſons who do not go upon *Sundays*, to ſome Congregation of Religious Worſhip, allowed by this Act, ſhall have any benefit at all by it.

The Bill is Long upon theſe Contents, and therefore upon Conſideration alſo, that it hath been once Printed already, ſo that the Copy thereof is in the hands of many (when it is not ſo, nor could be ſo with the other) it is conceived beſt, to forbear any further Repetition. For indeed, if the whole Bill for *Indulgence* were waved, and one Clauſe onely advanced into the Bill before for *Comprehenſion* (giving it the Title of a *Bill for Comprehenſion and Indulgence* both) it were rather to be Choſen, and eaſier Paſſed. That Clauſe ſhould be to this effect.

A Bill for aſmuch as there are ſome Miniſters of a good Life, that cannot (according to their Judgments) allow of our Parochial Churches, nor a Book of Liturgy; but do chuſe to Worſhip God and Jeſus Chriſt, *in the way of their Gathered or Separate Congregations, and crave the Protection and Clemency of the King, upon their Allegiance, as other Subjects.*

Be

Be it finally Enacted for the Happineſs and quiet of the Realm, and the Reduction of theſe Men, by other means than thoſe which have hitherto proved unſucceſsful, That every Chriſtian Subject throughout the Land, that profeſs the Reformed Religion, be pardoned all Faults and Penalties, incurr'd upon the Account of any forepaſt Nonconformity; And that all Proſecutions of the Penal Laws, which concern the Proteſtants, *and not the* Papiſts, *in the matter of Religion, ſhall be Suſpended, Until by a further Act of* Parliament, *thoſe that are fit to be tollerated, and the Intollerable be diſtinguiſhed; and ſuch Order be taken, as is neceſſary to the ſettling a more Firm and Laſting Union in the Nation.*

ERRATA.

PAge 20. l. 8. read *cuervo.* p. 27. l. 15. r. *Nachmanides.* p. 45. l. 31. r. *many other.* p. 51. l. 5. for *hope* r. *help* p. 56. l. 10. r. *deſquels.* l 23. r. *function.* p. 58. l. 8. f. *as* r. *or* p. 61. l. 7. r. *propoſition.* p. 72. l. 21. after *are* r. *not.* Some literal miſtakes there are in the Oriental words, as *Cheth* for *Ain*, *and Pe* for *Mem*, and others, wnich I omit. Beſides the mangling ſome *French* and *Italian* Quotations.

FINIS.